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# SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

*With brief surveys of Social Conditions in Vedic Literature ( from the Ṛigveda to the Śrauta-Sūtras ) and in early Avestan Literature.*

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By

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Gujarat College, AHMEDABAD.

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with a foreword

by

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Principal, Sir Parashrambhau College, Poona;

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1939.

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*To My uncle*

•

*The late Vaman Shivram Apte,* M. A.

•

*The first Principal and Professor of Sanskrit,*
*Fergusson College, Poona,*

*Who in his all too brief mundane career*
*of thirty-three years composed the*
*Sanskrit-English and English-San-*
*skrit Dictionaries, A Guide to*
*Sanskrit composition, the*
*Kusumamālā ( in two parts ),*
*the Progressive Exercises*
*( in two parts ) and*
*several other essays*
*on Sanskrit*
*literature.*

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# PREFACE

Regarding the Gṛihya-Sūtras, Dr. Winternitz says :[1] "'These Gṛihya-sūtras, insignificant though they may be as literary works, afford us a deep insight into the life of the ancient Indians. They are in truth a real treasure for the ethnologist. One need only remember how laboriously the student of classical antiquity has to collect the reports on the daily life of the ancient Greeks and Romans from the most diversified works. Here in India we have the most reliable reports, we may say reports of eye-witnesses, upon the daily life of the ancient Indians, in the form of rules and precepts in these apparently insignificant Sūtra-texts. They are as it were, the 'Folklore Journals' of ancient India. It is true, they describe the life of the ancient Indian father of the family only from the religious side, but as religion permeated the whole existence of the ancient Indians to such an extent that actually nothing could take place without an attendant religious ceremony, they are for the ethnologist, most invaluable sources for the popular customs and usages of that ancient period. The numerous parallels in the manners and customs of other Indo-European peoples, which have been discovered long ago, with the usages described in the Gṛihya-sūtras make these documents all the more important. In particular, the comparison of the Greek, Roman, Teutonic and Slavonic marriage customs

1, History of Indian Literature (English translation): Vol. I. p. 274.

with the rules contained in the Gṛihya-sūtras has shown that the relationship of the Indo-European peoples is not limited to language, but that these peoples, related in language, have also preserved common features from prehistoric times in their manners and customs." Inspite of this importance of the texts, I always felt they were rather neglected. I, therefore, set about synthesizing the abundant material available in these sūtras with a view to present as detailed a picture as possible of the social and religious conditions reflected in them. The genesis of the work, however, in its present form is explained by a peculiar circumstance.

When some years ago, I planned a sojourn of two years in England, with a view to qualify myself for the Ph. D. Degree of the University of Cambridge, an initial difficulty was that under the rules, a candidate for that degree has to pursue *in that University* a course of research for not less than three years. A saving clause, however, was that one year's exemption could be granted by the Board of Research Studies in Cambridge if they could accept a dissertation submitted by the candidate as evidence of one year's whole-time research already carried out in India. I, accordingly, submitted my labours in the field of the Gṛihya-sūtras in the form of such a dissertation and was granted the required exemption by the Board of Research Studies. That dissertation ( entirely different from the thesis which I offered later, for the Ph. D. Degree in Cambridge and which is at present being printed at the Cambridge University Press and will soon be published) is the present work. Needless to say, it has been revised and enlarged to some extent.

I have prefixed to each chapter short surveys or reviews of periods of Vedic literature earlier than that of the Gṛihya-sūtras from the point of view of the subject-matter of that particular chapter. These periods have been formulated on the principle of *relative* chronology only. The words of W. D. Whitney:[1] "All dates given in Indian literary history are pins set up to be bowled down again" unfortunately ring true even to this day if by 'dates' we mean 'exact dates'. *Relative* dates however may now be said to have been determined with some certainty. My object in giving these surveys is to present in a small compass, a connected account of the evolution of social practices in ancient India from the age of the Ṛigveda to that of the Gṛihya-sūtras-a stretch of time extending roughly from 2500 B. C. to 200 B. C. The upper and lower limits are rather *elastic* but exact dates are entirely outside the limited scope of the present work which sketches the cultural history of ancient India *as reflected in ancient Sanskrit literature.* One advantage of these brief reviews is that they set the *Gṛihya-sūtra* picture in the proper perspective and correct the tendency to look upon a practice not mentioned in these texts as unknown to the people of those days!

For similar reasons, I have added an appendix (which was not a part of my original dissertation)-an appendix entitled: "Social Conditions in Avestan Literature". The very intimate relationship between the Veda and the Avesta with regard to language and *riligious views,* is now a well-admitted fact. Macdonell (History of Sanskrit

1. Introduction to 'Sanskrit Grammar'.

Literature : p. 12) rightly observes "Considering that the affinity of the oldest form of the Avestan language with the dialect of the Vedas is already so great, that by the mere application of phonetic laws, whole Avestan stanzas may be translated word for word into Vedic so as to produce verses correct not only in form but in poetic spirit; considering further, that if we knew the Avestan language at as early a stage as we know the Vedic, the former would necessarily be almost identical with the latter, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the Indian branch must have separated from the Iranian only a very short time before the beginnings of Vedic literature". It may be noted further that these two peoples remained neighbours even after separation. The appendix is, therefore, meant just to stimulate a study of the broad lines–convergent and divergent–of Indo-Iranian civilization so that we can get an insight into the genius of Aryan culture.

For these surveys of early Vedic and Avestan literatures, I have drawn liberally on the books listed in the 'Bibliography.' I only claim that within their limited scope I have described nearly all the important social aspects of these periods that are interesting from a *comparative* point of view. But for the main thesis of my work–Life in the Gṛihya-sūtras—I alone am responsible as I have relied solely on the original sources viz. the available Gṛihya-sūtras.

In the presentation of the material, I have adopted the following plan. Before describing a social or ritual practice or belief, I have made sure that it is either mentioned in a majority of the Gṛihya-sūtras or though mentioned in a few of them, is entirely in keeping with the spirit of the Gṛihya-sūtras age. The references to the original texts have been *as far as possible,* confined to the Āśvalāyana, Śāṅkhāyana, Gobhila, Khādira, Āpastamba, Hiraṇyakeśin and Pāraskara Gṛihya-sūtras for the convenience of the general reader to whom these are the more easily accessible Gṛihya-sūtras in a translated form, in the Sacred Books of the East, Vols. XXIX and XXX. The rules of the Gṛihya-sūtras and the mantras quoted by them from the particular Saṁhitā to which they belong are reproduced *in English* as giving the Sanskrit original and the translation in each case would have added enormously and unnecessarily to the size of the volume. For the same reason, a statement or a rule is referred to one Sūtra only but may not on that account be looked upon as an exceptional or solitary one. That was also the consideration in omitting the *details* of the almost continuous sūtra-references and in merely making a general reference such as:—"In the Upanayana ceremony according to P." (=Pāraskara) etc.

The detailed table of contents is almost a complete summary of the work and will, if properly handled, serve the purpose of an Index, which I should be excused for omitting.

And now to the pleasant duty of thanksgiving. I

cannot adequately thank Principal R. D. Karmarkar, for having kindly consented to introduce my work with a foreword, inspite of the heavy and almost exacting demands on his time and attention that are constantly being made by his position as Professor and Principal of a great College, as a member of the Syndicate (University of Bombay) and as an important office-bearer in several academic institutions in the city of Poona and elsewhere.

25th May 1939.
AHMEDABAD } **V. M. Apte.**

# FOREWORD.

It gives me great pleasure to write this Foreword to 'Social and Religious Life in the Gṛihyasūtrās' by Dr. V. M. Apte, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad. I have been knowing Mr. Apte for more than twenty-five years and I am glad that a part of the results of his study of sūtra literature is being published in a book-form and made available for a wider public.

It is a pity that the study of Gṛihya-Sūtras has not found a more honoured place in the curriculum for Sanskrit studies at the Bombay University. In a sense, the Gṛihya-sūtras are far more important than even the Vedic Sahmitā or Brāhmaṇa literature. For, it is in the Gṛihya Sūtras or Domestic Ritual that we seem to meet the real society-man of ancient times in whom we can take more than a mere academic interest. There is no doubt that the Gṛihya-Sūtras represent popular traditition far more truly and completely than any other form of literature, inspite of their being steeped in dogmatic rules and regulations about the most apparently trivial acts. It is only recently that Sociology as a science for study, has come into its own and projects are being set on foot every where for sociological surveys of different regions or races. But such sociological surveys seem to have been carried out in India, at least two thousand years ago! For after all, what are the Gṛihya-Sūtrās of the different śākhās but the sociological surveys of their respective

sects ? And as regards the saṁskāras, they provide the most interesting subjet for study. It is easy enough to laugh at some of them; in fact, it is a general complaint against Hinduism that it contains too many regulations and sacraments and that the life of a Hindu is nothing but a round of saṁskāras from birth to death (and even after death for the saṁskāras do not let the poor Hindu go out of their clutches even when he is dead !) But from the sociological point of view, these sacraments are invaluable and a comparative study of these with the customs and manners of other ancient peoples is bound to be extremely interesting (as is proved by the monumental works of Sir J. Frazer).

Dr. Apte has given as many details and has tackled the subject from as many angles as could be done in the space at his disposal. He has neatly arranged the subject-matter in suitable chapters and has tried to make his book interesting, without making it the less scholarly on that account. I am sure it would greatly stimulate the study of the Gṛihya-Sūtrās by our University students.

A book like this was long overdue and bears testimony to the author's tremendous labour in gathering the material and his keen judgment in arranging it under appropriate topics. Dr. Apte can be safely congratulated upon having made an original contribution to a problem of Sūtra-literature.

23rd May 1939.
POONA

R. D. Karamarkar.
Principal, Sir Parashrambhau
College, POONA.

## The System of Transliteration adopted.

*The vowels*:—a, ā, i ī, u, ū, ṛi, ṛī, e, ai, o, au.
*Anusvāra* (pure nasal):—ṁ.
Visarjanīya:—ḥ.
*The gutturals*:—ka, kha, ga, gha, ṅa.
*The palatals*:—cha, chha, ja, jha, ña.
*The cerebrals*:—ṭa, ṭha, ḍa, ḍha, ṇa.
*The dentals*:—ta, tha, da, dha, na.
*The labials*:—pa, pha, ba, bha, ma.
*The semivowels*:—ya, ra, la, va.
*The sibilants*:—śa (palatal), sha (cerebral), sa (dental).
*One aspiration*:—ha.

## Bibliography and Abbreviations.

*A.* The original sources for the main thesis of the work: '*Social and Religions Life in the Gṛihya-Sūtras*' are the following Gṛihya-sūtras (=G. S.):—

(1) The Āśvalāyana Gṛihya-sūtra = Ā. or Ā. G. S.
(2) The Sāṅkhyāyana or Śāṅkhāyana Gṛihya-sūtra = S. or S. G. S.
(3) The Śāmbavya Gṛihya-sūtra.

*These belong to the ṚigVeda.*

(4) The Gobhila Gṛihya-sūtra = G. or G. G. S. with its Mantrabrāhmaṇa = MB.
(5) The Khādira Gṛihya-sūtra = Kh. or Kh. G. S.
(6) The Jaiminīya Gṛihya-sūtra.

*These belong to the Sāma-Veda.*

(7) The Āpastamba Gṛihya-sūtra=Āp. or Āp. G. S.

(8) The Hiraṇyakeśi Gṛihya-sūtra=H. or H. G. S.

(9) The Baudhāyana Gṛihya-sūtra.

(10) The Bhāradvāja Grihya-sūtra.

(11) The Vaikhānasa Grihya-sūtra.

(12) The Mānava Gṛihya-sūtra.

(13) The Kāṭhaka Gṛihya-sūtra, known by different names such as the Laugākshi G. S. (Kashmir Sanskrit series No. XLIX), or Charaka G. S. or Chārāyaṇīya G. S.

*These seven belong to the Black Yajurveda.*

(14) The Pāraskara Gṛihya-sūtra=P. or P. G. S.

*This belongs to the White Yajurveda.*

(15) The Kauśika Gṛihya-sūtra belonging to the Atharva-Veda.

*B.* For the short surveys of earlier periods of Vedic literature prefixed to each chapter, the following books have been (and may be) consulted:—

✓(1) The Cambridge History of India=C. H. I.
Vol. I Ancient India

✓(2) A History of Sanskrit Literature *Vedic* Period, by C. V. Vaidya =H. V. L.

(3) A History of Sanskrit Literature by Macdonell =H. S. L.

✓(4) A History of Indian Literature Vol. I=H. I. L. by Winternitz (translated by Mrs. Ketkar).

(5) Religion and Philosophy of the Veda=H. O. S. by Keith: Harvard Oriental series Vols. 31 & 32.

(6) Sacred Books of the East Vols. XXIX and XXX on the Gṛihya-Sūtras by Oldenberg. =S. B. E.

(7) History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 2. (Belvalkar and Ranade)=H. I. P.

(8) Hillebrandt: Ritual-Litteratur Bühler's Encyclopædia, 1897.

(9) Indische studien Vol. XV.

(10) Zimmer: Altindische Leben.

(11) History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature by Max Müller

(12) Weber's History of Indian Literature.

(13) Ancient India: Rapson, Cambridge.

(14) R. C. Dutt: History of Civillization in Ancient India.

(15) M'crindle: Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian.

(16) Mrs. Manning: Ancient and Medieval India.

(17) Dr. Altekar: Village Communities in Western India (Oxford University Press).

(18) Dr. G. S. Ghurye: 'The Ethnic Theory of Caste' in 'Man in India' Vol. IV.

(19) Senart: Les castes dans l' Inde.

And several other books.

*C.* For the appendix: Social Conditions in Avestan Literature:—

(1) Zoroastrian Civilization by M. N. Dhalla, New York 1922.

(2) Cama memorial Volume, edited by J. J. Modi.

(3) Education among the Ancient Iranians : J. J. Modi.

(4) Early Zoroastrianism by J. H. Moulton, London 1913.

(5) Ostiranische Kultur im Altertum : by Wilhelm Geiger; translated by Sanjana. 2 Vols.

(6) Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis : by Martin Haug.

(7) Die Iranische Religion. In Grundriess der Iranischen Philologie, Vol. 2: by A. V. William Jackson.

Other works by A. V. William Jackson and those of G. K. Nariman have also been consulted.

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# Social and Religious Life In the Gṛihya-Sūtras

## Chapter 1.

### The Caste—System.

*Present characteristics.*

Although there is hardly a country where classes or orders of society or grades and distinctions of social status are not met with, the development of that wonderful institution, known as the Caste–System among the Hindus in India, may almost be said to be without a parallel in the social history of other nations of the world. A common origin, name, tutelary deity, occupation and ceremonial, mark out one homogeneous caste–group from another no doubt, but commensality and connubium between the members of this group to the exclusion of another group are to-day the essential and outstanding characteristics of a caste among the Hindus ? It will be interesting, therefore, to trace the origin and evolution of Caste in ancient Sanskrit literature from the Ṛig-veda down to the Gṛihya-sūtras.

## PART I THE ṚIG—VEDA PERIOD.

In the famous Purusha-sūkta, a late hymn in the Ṛig-veda, four orders of men are mentioned as having a divine origin. Otherwise, however, in the earlier portions, two Varṇas only, the light and the dark ( the word Varṇa being still used in its literal sense ), or the Ārya-varṇa ( the fair-skinned conquering Āryans ) and the Dasyu-varṇa ( the dark-skinned conquered aborigines ) are referred to, along with three occupational classes among the former, the Brahma ( the priests), the Kshatra ( the warriors ) and the Viśah (tillers of the soil). The Dasyu-varṇa became later the Śūdras or servile classes. Various theories are advanced by different scholars as regards the origin and evolution of caste in this period. One view is this:-(1) The Āryans when they entered India knew nothing of caste or Varṇas. When, however, they penetrated into India from the North-west and went on advancing towards the east and the south, the necessity of a ceaseless struggle with the resisting non-Āryans with a distinct culture and colour of their own, led to the formation of a special warrior class ( the Kshatriyas ) serving as a kind of standing army. Among the non-fighters, the large majority that settled down to the cultivation of the conquered land and other industries were called the Viśah or the common people. The more intellectual among them dedicated themselves to the task of preservation by means of recitation, of the sacred hymnology of the Āryans handed down from pre-historic times by word of mouth and the exact performance on behalf of others of the ritual which, simple perhaps

in the beginning, tended to become more and more elaborate. Thus arose the hieratic order, the Brahma or the Brāhmins, whose power dates from the time of the employment of Purohitas by kings as their substitutes in the performance of sacrificial worship as seen in the Ṛig-veda. The conquered aborigines who accepted the Āryan faith, were incorporated into the Āryan fold as the fourth, the servile class or the Śūdras. ( This view does not now hold the field ). Another view and a more probable one is; (2) Brahma, Kshatra, and Viśah as occupational classes though not hereditary as yet, did exist among the Āryans in the early Ṛig-veda period, nay, even before they entered India as is shown by the existence of similar classes among the Iranians, *viz*, the priests ( Athravans ), the warriors ( Rathaesthas ), the agriculturists, and the artisans. The fact that Devāpi,[1] a politician Kshatriya, performs the functions of a sacrificial priest ( in Ṛig-veda X, 98,5 ) indicates that these classes were not hereditary. (3) A third view, and a very reasonable one in my opinion, is[2] " While it is true that the caste-system is only in process of development in the Ṛig-veda, it seems impossible to deny that much of ground-work upon which the later elaborate structure was based was already in existence " and again[3] " Similar class distinctions are found in other Indo-European communities and the Iranian classes of Athravans and

1 The Indian Caste-system: Dr. Bhandarkar's Complete works. Vol. II. P. 471.

2 Cambridge History of India Vol. I P. 94

3 Ibid P. 125.

Rathaesthas make it probable that these two were perhaps *hereditary* even in the Ṛig-veda period. These distinctions are perhaps earlier than the severance of the Indo-Iranians, if not as old as the union of the Āryan peoples ". This view is supported by the fact pointed out by Sir H. Risley that the Athravans did not give their daughters in marriage to men of the lower classes. What appears likely, therefore, is that whereas the elements of the three-fold division of castes mentioned above were present in Āryan Society before their entry into India, the admission of the aborigines of India to the Āryan fold was responsible for the formation of the fourth, the servile or Śūdra class, a complication which gradually led to the hardening of all caste-distinctions into a rigid structure.

## PART 2. THE PERIOD OF THE OTHER SAMHITĀS AND BRĀMAṆAS.

In the Yajur-veda and the Brāhmaṇas, the term Varṇa means 'caste' without any distinction of colour. The contact of the three Āryan castes with the Śūdras through intermarriage led to mixed castes and difference of occupations tended to increase the number of castes generally ( Mr. C. V. Vaidya, holds however that mixed castes had not arisen in this period and that the Purusha-Medha chapter in the white Yajur-veda enumerates as victims members of different *professions* and not castes. No mixed castes had arisen even in the days of the Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa, according to the same scholar). Kings however were

*Evidence of Rājanya ascendency.*

not only seers of hymns but sacrificers as also instructors of Brahmins in the Brahma-vidyā *in some cases e. g.* in the Chhāndogya upanishad, when the Brahmin Śvetaketu approaches Aśvapati, a Kshatriya king, for learning a philosophical doctrine, the latter hesitates as this was rather unusual. It is doubtful whether this means that a change of caste was possible. From the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa it appears that there were two classes of priests, the Purohitas and the village priests, who were both at the mercy of the king. Imprecations against royal oppressors of Brahmins in the Atharva-veda and the statement therein that kings and nations that persecute the Brahmins do not prosper suggest that persecution of Brahmins was not unknown. " The Brahmin takes a position lower than that of the Kshatriya ruler ( " Tasmāt Brāhmaṇah kshatriyam adhastāt upāste " ) in an Upanished indicates social inferiority if not religious. As against this, there

*Brahmin superiority.*

is ample evidence of Brahmin superiority. The Brahmins were perhaps not under the power of the king as the references to Viśaḥ as subjects of the king prominently, show ( Tāṇḍya Br. ). Chhāndogya Up. ११.20 condemns the censure of Brāhmins. In the absence of the definite relative chronology of the various Saṁhitā, Brāhmaṇa and Upanishad texts, it is difficult to reconcile these little contradictions which, perhaps, show that the gulf between these two upper classes was not wide. The Dakshiṇā or fees paid to the Brahmins for their services at the sacrifices were

purely voluntary gifts, though richly deserved and do not suggest greed on their part as there is no recorded instance of a Brahmin growing rich on these. The

*Vaiśyas.*

Vaiśyas or the common people were partly tenants under kingly landlords or industrial workers such as chariot-makers ( carpenters ) smiths tanners etc. They were the *Aryan masses* as such. It is important to note that no Vaiśya is mentioned as rising to the position of a priest. The stories of Satyakāma Jābāla

*The Śūdra.*

and Jānaśruti in the Upanishads show that the teaching of philosophy was not with-held from the Śūdras or low-caste people. Wealthy Śudras are mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas. The subjugated aboriginal tribes appear to have formed endogamous Śūdra groups within the Āryan fold. But the Śūdra is impure and unfit to offer a sacrifice or even to milk a cow for sacrificial purposes. Speaking to a Śūdra after consecration is forbidden and the Aitareya Br. even describes him as 'yathākāmavadhya ( fit to be beaten with impunity ). However, in the Atharva-veda blessings are invoked on the Āryan as well as the Śūdra' which shows that he was not then hated though looked down upon. Whether the Vrātyas mentioned in the Vrātya Stoma ceremony of the Tāṇḍya Br. were fallen Āryans or non.-Aryans eager for conversion to the Āryan creed is not certain.

## PART 3. THE PRE-GṚIHYA-SŪTRA OR ŚRAUTA-SŪTRA PERIOD.

The Anuloma system of marriage prevailed in this

period, the progeny belonging to the varṇa of the father. The Śrauta Sūtras, *e. g.* direct the sacrificer to cohabit with a Savarṇā wife as far as possible or at best with a lower-caste one but never with a Śūdra one. Pāṇini's division of Śūdras into 'Nirvāsita' and anirvāsita indicates that certain degraded Śūdras with uncleanly habits like the Nishādas were forced to reside outside the village or town. The Rāshṭra or nation consisted only of the three higher castes, the Śūdras being excluded. The Śūdras were denied the privilege of Saṁnyāsa ( Renunciation ). The other disabilities of the earlier periods, of course, continued. The power of the Brahmins has grown. They could become kings at times but Kshatrias could hardly become priests in this period. They were exempt from taxes. Mr. C. V. Vaidya thinks that the intermediate castes had not arisen even in this period though some caste-sections were degraded.

## PART 4. GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

The Gṛihya-Sūtras; not only presuppose a well established division of society into the four principal castes but also give a clear mutual differentiation of their respective occupations, obligations, duties and privileges, in matters spiritual and worldly.

### Section A.

Differentiations of status, privileges, duties, etc. among the three higher castes.

Confining our attention first to the three higher castes only, we get the following picture. Different ages

*Different ages for sacramental fitness.*

are prescribed for the different castes in connection with the various sacraments such as the Chūḍākaraṇa (the tonsure ceremony of a child) and the Upanayana (or Initiation ceremony). We cannot be sure whether these different prescriptions were adjustments necessitated originally by the differences of mental calibre or moral fibre in the different caste-groups. Thus, the Chūḍākarman is to be performed in the case of a Brahmin child in its first or third year; a Kshatriya child, in its fifth year; and a Vaiśya one, in its seventh year. Similarly, eligibility for the Initiation ceremony comes to the Brahmin boy when he is 7 years old, to the Rājanya one when 11 years old, and to the Vaiśya one when he is 12 years of age. Different seasons, even, are prescribed for the performance of the ceremony *e. g.* spring for the Brahmin, summer for the Rājanya, and autumn for the Vaiśya. The differentiation extends even to such minor things as the material constituting the girdle, staff and skin to be used by the Brahmachārin (S). Where garments are prescribed for his use (Ā), they are to be dyed ones of different colours for the three castes. An option or free choice is allowed in some matters by some Gṛihya-Sūtras *e. g.* all sorts of staff may be used for all classes (S) or as Āp. says that according to some the staff of the Brahmachārin should be made of the wood of any tree without reference to caste. The Upanayana-mantra sacred to the Sun and therefore called Sāvitrī-was also to be different, *e. g.* the Gāyatrī (Ṛig-Veda III, 6, 10) was to be taught to the Brahmin, the Trishṭubh

*Initiation.*

verse (Ṛig-Veda IV, 35, 2) to a Rājanya, and the Jagatī verse (Ṛig-Veda IV. 50, 5) to a Vaiśya though Pāraskara permits the teaching of the Gāyatrī to all. In the daily begging of alms compulsory for the Brahmachārin, the manner in which the student was to address his request for alms to the lady of the house he approaches, was to differ according to his caste. The formula for the Brahmin was "Om? bhavati bhikshām dehi?"; for the Kshatriya "Om! Bhishām bhavati dehi!" and for the Vaiśya "Om? Bhikshām dehi, bhavati?" (P). The Nāmakaraṇa (or ceremony of naming the child) prescribes different names *e. g.* that of a Brahmin was to end in Śarman; that of a Kshatriya, in Varman; and that of a Vaiśya in Gupta (P). In the selection of the proper site for the building of a house, different types and colours of the soil are prescribed, *e.g.* the Brahmin should select a soil that is white, sandy and sweet; a Kshatriya red; and a Vaiśya, yellow soil (A). There were distinctions of privilege in the sphere of marriage as well. A Brahmin could marry three wives (a Brahmin, a Kshatriya and a Vaiśya one); a Kshatriya two (a Kshatriya and a Vaiśya one); and a Vaiśya, one of his own caste according to the standard ritual. Every one of them could marry a Śūdra woman in addition with the usual ritual but *without any Mantras*. A Śūdra could have only a Śūdra wife, married without any Mantras (P). That the process of differentiation could percolate to the most

*Manner of begging.*

*Different names.*

*Different sites.*

*Marriage.*

unessential matters is seen from the directions regarding Anulepana or salving which is a part of the Snāna ( or bath ) ceremony ( signifying the completion of the period of Brahmacharya or Vedic study ). After salving his two hands, the Brahmin should salve his head first, the Rājanya his two arms, and the Vaiśya, his belly (Ā), ( which perhaps reflects the special importance of the particular part of the body to the particular caste ! ). Even in the giving of gifts, financial condition as well as caste determine the nature of the gift. The Brahmin gives away a cow as a gift; a Rājanya, a village; and a Vaiśya, a horse, at the wedding ceremony ( S. & Ā. ). Finally, at the Godāna-ceremony, the Brahmin has to give an ox and a cow; a Kshatriya a pair of horses; and a Vaiśya, a sheep, as the sacrificial fee; or a cow is given by all (G).

## Section "B".

### The Brahmin as distinguished from the rest.

A verse quoted in S. G. S. enumerates Yajana-Yājana (sacrificing for oneself and others), adhyayana-adhyāpana (studying the veda and teaching it to others) and Dāna-pratigraha (giving gifts and accepting them) as the peculiar *duties and privileges* of a Brahmin. The feasting of learned Brahmins, calling forth their blessings (Brāhmaṇa-bhojanam ) is universally laid down as the concluding feature of every sacrament. The rule that only Brahmins who are spotless in character and proficient in Vedic learning should be invited for the monthly śrāddha (H) shows the high standard of purity

*Feasting of Brahmins.*

and culture expected in them. That this feasting was more a disinterested homage to the noble qualities of the spiritually-minded Brahmins than a sop to a worldly-minded priesthood, is clear from the rules that the Brahmins so invited, must not be relatives, either on the mother's side or father's side nor related to the host in the capacity of a Ṛitvig, teacher or pupil and the emphatic prohibition on managing the invitations in a bargaining spirit (H). The list of qualities, which the Brahmin invited to a dinner, is expected to possess throws an interesting light on the general level of Brahmin worth in those days. A fine voice, a dignified appearance, suitable age, learning, moral character, and correct conduct, are the qualities required *but* (and here is a practical recognition of grim realities) learning out-weighs all other considerations (S. I. 2). S. then quotes a passage which says that *he* is an ideal Brahmin deserving to be feasted, who has not only studied the Veda, but is a performer of austerities and sacred ritual. These Brāhmaṇa-bhojanas or feasting of Brahmins though a common and essential feature of all rites, took place on a really magnificent scale in connection with the Śrāddha offerings which derive their name from Śraddhā or faith (*i.e.* food given with faith) and which were offered not only on the Parvan of the New Moon but also on other occasions. Ornaments and other gifts also along with food were given to the Brahmins on these occasions. The Pātṛika Brahmins invited at a Śrāddha represented the father, the grand-father and the great-grand-father, according to their age and the others

*The Brahmins as priests.*

represented the Viśvedevas. This is closely allied to the notion that oblations given to a Brahmin reach the deity whom the sacrificer wishes to satiate, because he is a representative, custodian or agent of the same. He is called the *vessel* of the gods (S). In the performance of the various domestic sacrifices excepting the daily morning and evening oblations which could be offered by a Brahmin substitute if he is unable to offer them himself, the services of the Brahman or priest are to be requisitioned by the house-holder who himself acts as the Hotṛi, but he could, if he chose, play the part of Hotṛi as well as Brahman (G). In fact, except at the Dhanvantari and spit-ox sacrifices, the assistance of a Brahman is optional (Ā). When in S. I, 8,6, & 7, we are told that the sacrificer places the Brahman, south with the words "Bhūr, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ" and decorates him with flowers, it is implied according to the commentator that there was ordinarily no Brahman present but his place was filled by a bundle of Kuśa grass which consisted of fifty blades that represented him (p. 24, S. B. E. Vol. XXIX). The Āśvalāyana Gṛihya-Sūtra 1,23 incidentally gives rules for selecting priests to officiate at the Śrauta sacrifices as well ( thus covering the same ground as does Ā. Śrauta-Sūtra IV, 1,6,7 and IX,3,20 ). The rules give us an insight into the cult of priest-hood. They *i.e.* the priests, should be young and free from any physical deformity. The Brahman is to be chosen first, then the Hotṛi, then the Adhvaryu, and then the Udgātṛi. Either only four or all the sixteen priests that usually officiate at the Ahīna (lasting for more than one day ) and Ekāha sacrifices may be chosen. In the latter case, the order of choosing is different, namely

the Hotṛi, the Brahman, the Adhvaryu and the Udgātṛi. The twelve priests out of these sixteen that do not stand at the head of one of the four categories are called Hotrakas and are to be chosen next. In addition to these sixteen who had the rank of Ṛitvijs or officiating priests, there were other priests like the Sadasya, the Chamasādhvaryu and the śamitṛi who were also chosen to take part in a Śrauta sacrifice.

*An organised priest-hood.*

The office of a Ṛitvig is not to be accepted, if declined by another, at an Ahīna sacrifice with insufficient fee, or on behalf of a person that is ill, suffering from consumption, unpopular in his village or of low birth, In fact the invitation to officiate is to be accepted only if satisfactory answers are received to the formal yet necessary queries pertaining to the amount of the fee, the nature of the sacrifice, and the names of the other officiating priests. All this shows organization. The officiating priests are to abstain from flesh and sexual intercourse until the sacrifice is completed. That the priesthood was only human is seen from the reference in P. II, 11; 8 to the Tanūnapatra ceremony, in which the Yajamāna and the officiating priest at a soma sacrifice pledge their faith not to harm each other. The priestly fees for the sacrifices in connection with different sacraments are a cow, a pair of garments, gold, Madhu-parka or at least feeding of the Brahmins. According to Ā. a full vessel is the lowest fee for a Pākayajña. There is no limit to the highest. In the daily Vaiśvadeva ceremony, the 'agra' or Brahmin's portion is taken out first and given to him. ( P ).

The respect and confidence inspired by the Brahmin class as such in the minds of the people is seen in some minor directions, *e. g.* in the description of the Cohabitation ceremony ( H. I. 24. 8 ); the husband calls the wife who has taken a bath, put on a clean dress *and spoken with a Brahmin*:—the last act being looked upon as purificatory like the other acts. Similarly in the Sīmantonnayana ceremony, whatever an aged Brahmin woman with husband and children living, prescribes is to be done ( Ā ). In the house of such a Brahmin woman with living husband and children again, is the bride to stay for some time after the Saptapadī ceremony, When the Snātaka after completing his period of Brahmacharya and Vedic study at the Guru's house is offered a reception on his return to his own village, his left foot in washed first, if he is a Brahmin but his *right* foot first, if he is either a Rājanya or a Vaiśya ( H ). A Brahmin alone was to pound and press the Nyagrodha plant in the Puṁsavana ceremony ( P ). According to Kh. Gṛihya-Sūtra, even a Brahma-bandhu ( a Brahmin by mere birth ) could do this.

*His privileges.*

A person moving in a chariot was to descend on seeing Brahmins, to pay homage to them, as on seeing temples, cows and elderly persons ( P ). A Brahmin is one of the holy objects such as the sun, fire, etc. to be looked at by the performer of Śākvara vow. Finally the all-important position attained by the Brahmins in religious matters is reflected in the fact that in many cases the Gṛihya-sūtras take notice

*The respect he commanded.*

only of the case of a bride-groom or the performer being a Brahmin. The probable explanation of this appears to be that very often when members of the other Varṇas performed the Gṛihya ceremonies, the Brahmins acted on their behalf.

### Section "C".

The Brahmin and the Kshatriya as distinguished from the rest.

As we have seen in the Ṛig-Veda and Brāhmaṇa periods, the Brahmin and the Rājanya classes were not widely separated from each other in social status, By the time of the Gṛihya-Sūtras, the Brahmin has advanced in power no doubt, but the equally vital importance of the two highest classes for the well-being of society is always recognised, *e. g.* in the Pratyavarohaṇa ( or ceremony of redescent from the high bedstead resorted to during the rains for fear of the serpents ) the prayer is " I establish myself in the Brahma, I establish myself in the Kshatra " ( S )-the two castes symbolising holy lustre and 'military power.'-Similarly, the Brahma and the Kshatra are, along with truth, faith, sacrifice and insight, represented metaphorically as the posts of the new house (S)-which metaphor expresses the literal truth that the two classes are the pillars of society. Of the three higher castes the Vaiśyas who by the very nature of their occupations *viz*-agriculture, cattle-breeding and commerce etc. came into close contact with the Śūdras in their daily life, deteriorated in culture and suffered a dimunition, perhaps, of social status very

early. This may explain the isolated grandeur of the two highest classes.

### Section "D".

The three Dvija-castes as distinguished from the Śūdra one.

Whatever the mutual differentiations of rank and status within the three higher castes, they are nothing like the almost unbridgeable gulf which divides the Śūdra from them. This is, as seen above, due to the non-Āryan origin of the Śūdra class. The Initiation ceremony, which signifies a kind of spiritual (second) birth, *is not for the Śūdra at all* and is responsible for the appellation " Dvija (or twice-born) for the higher castes collectively. (For the significance of the Upanayana ceremony, refer to the Chapter on Education). *The popular notion that the Vaiśya class had very little in common with the two higher classes in religious matters is erroneous* e. g. when the domestic fire is to be kindled for the first time, it may be brought from the house of a Vaiśya rich in cattle (S) or from the house of one who performs many sacrifices, be he a Vaiśya, a Kshatriya, or a Brahmin. So the line of religious demarcation came at the Śūdra class and not at the Vaiśya one. The absence of the Upanayana ceremony for the Śūdra became at once the cause and effect of his low position. Vedic study is prohibited in the neighbourhood of a Śūdra (for fear, perhaps, that his defective vocal organism might corrupt the traditional mode of correct vedic recitation). The privilege of going through the sanctifying sacraments (excepting that of marriage which takes place without the recitation of mantras in

his case ) is denied to the Śūdra. Even the G. S. chapters on house-building exclude the case of a Śūdra who it seems, could not select a site ( for building a house upon ) from the open spaces, like the Dvijas. The rules of conduct for a Snātaka may however, be followed by a 'Dvijāteranyaḥ' i. e. a Śūdra ( 'other than a Dvijāti ). It is a Śūdra servant, male or female, that washes the feet of a Snātaka at the time of his reception into his village. The remnants of food at sacramental feasts are given to a Śūdra. The company of Vṛishalas ( another name for the Śūdras) is prohibited for a Snātaka while entering a village (G). But a very peculiar rule (G) is that a Snātaka was to avoid *looking at a Śūdra or eating food* cooked by a Śūdra for three days and nights after his Bath i.e. Samāvartana *which definitely establishes, that the food of a Śūdra was allowed at other times and that commensalism was not denied to the Śūdra in those days at least.* As service was the only occupation of a Śūdra, Śūdra, servants were employed in all departments of an Āryan household, *not excluding the kitchen.*

*The Śūdra not an untouchable !*

## Section "E".

### The Chāṇḍāla or the out-cast.

If the Upanayana ceremony did not take place within the prescribed period, a social boycott and exclusion from intercourse followed as a punishment for the person until the Prāyaśchitta or expiation was performed. If, however, no expiation was undergone and the ceremony of Upanayana was neglected for three

generations in a family, then nothing short of the Vrātya-Stoma ceremony (already mentioned in the Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa) of expiation could secure for the family, re-admission to society (P). *This makes it almost certain that the horrors of an almost irremediable and age-long outcasting (as seen in the case of the so-called untouchables at present) were unknown in the Gṛihya-Sūtra days!* Before such expiation took place, of course, a Chāṇḍāla (or the the outcast) was an inauspicious sight for a student practising the Āraṇyaka vow. Perhaps such fallen people or outcasts lived outside the village or town until they were admitted to the Āryanfold.

## Section "F"

### The mixed castes.

The intermediate castes, in the opinion of many scholars had arisen as early as the period of the later Saṁhitās, as we noted above. Even if we hold with Mr. C. V. Vaidya that the intermediate castes had not arisen even in the days of the Śrauta-sūtras and Pāṇini though some caste-sections had been degraded, (the Ratha-kāra being according to him the name of a profession only), their existence in the Gṛihya-sūtra period is not to be doubted though they are not enumerated therein. The Anuloma system of marriage was bound to lead sooner or later to caste-divisions although in the beginning for some time the rule that theprogeny belonged to the Varṇa of the father precluded such a possibility. The Dharma-sūtras (e. g. the Gautama Dharma-sūtra IV, 16–18) give the names of the mixed castes that arose not only as a result of the permitted Anuloma marriages but also as a result of the prohibited Pratiloma marriages which *not*

*rarely* took place. The Vasishṭha Dh. S. (XVIII, 1) *e. g.* tells us that the offspring of a Śūdra male and of a female of the Brāhmaṇa caste becomes a Chāṇḍāla who was treated almost as an outcast. The Gṛihya-sūtras raise an interesting though complex problem. In all their numerous rules for sacraments and ritual they rarely, if ever, mention the mixed castes; their rules are framed only for the Brahmin, the Kshatriya and the Vaiśya? Two explanations of this omission are possible. The progeny of Pratiloma marriages of course may have been altogether excluded from the sacraments but if anuloma progeny also was similarly excluded, then a very large number of people would be denied the spiritual benefit of the sacraments? This, according to Bühler (S. B. E. Vol. XIV Introduction P. XXXVIII) is the view of the Āp. G. S. which omits the Ratha-kāra in the Initiation rules II, 4, 10, 5 whereas an earlier view is reflected in the Baudhāyana G. S. VI, 5, 8, 9, which prescribes spring, summer, autumn, and the rainy season, as proper seasons for the initiation of a Brāhmaṇa, Kshatriya, a Vaiśya and a Ratha-kāra respectively, although the Ratha-kāra is the offspring of a Vaiśya male and Śūdra female. Three or four stages then, may be distinguished, of the treatment of the mixed castes from the sacramental point of view. The earliest was perhaps when the progeny of Anuloma marriages was absorbed in the father's Varṇa and was eligible for sacraments as Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas. The next stage was when some important intermediate castes like that of the Ratha-kāra received a separate treatment in the rules regarding the sacraments to which they were admitted as for example in Baudhāyana G. S. VI, 5, 8, 9. The third stage was

reached when as in Ap. G. S. II, 4, 10, 5 the Rathakāra and other mixed castes were excluded from the sacraments. The fourth stage perhaps was reached when even the simple domestic ritual of the Gṛihya-Sūtras, though theoretically prescribed for the three higher Varṇas, was virtually performed only by the Brahmins for themselves and on behalf of other Varṇas !

Finally it may be pointed out that the caste-system in the days of the Gṛihya-and Dharma-Sūtras was not as wooden, rigid and exclusive in its treatment of the outcasts as it has become now. Outcasts who had performed the prescribed penance (Vasishṭha Dh. S. XV, 17) could be readmitted to the social fold. This shows the elastic nature of the rules.

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# Chapter II.

## Marriage and the Position of the Woman.

### PART 1 THE ṚV. PERIOD.

Ṛig-veda X, 85 is a long and important hymn throwing much light on the marriage ceremonial in those ancient times. Sūryā, the daughter of the Sun (*i. e.* the Dawn) is married to Soma (the moon) and the Aśvinau are the groomsmen or intermediaries. The chief features of the ceremony were as follows:—

*The chief features of the Marriage-ceremony.*

Suitors approached the father of the girl to be married

and asked for permission through the mediation of intimate friends. The father made the selection generally (but ṚV X, 27, 11. shows that girls, grown-up ones as they were, not infrequently made their own choice). The system of child-marriage did not obtain, as the hymn almost suggests that girls were married when they longed to have husbands and as elsewhere unmarried girls growing old in the father's house are mentioned). The bride then (when the match is fixed) goes in a procession to her husband's house, mounting a chariot drawn by two bulls and adorned with red flowers, to the accompaniment of music, taking with her the dowry of horses and cattle given by her father. Then takes place the ceremony proper, the essence of which is the clasping of the bride's hand by the bride-groom, symbolising their permanent friendship. Invocation and a sacrifice to the god of fire in whose presence this takes place, follow next. Then blessings are invoked on the newly-wedded couple on the bride's arrival at her new home (The disconnected character of this hymn and a revised version of it in the Atharva-veda make it difficult for us to understand the exact sequence of events). Indra was finally invoked to grant ten sons to the bride.

*No child-marriage.*

The ṚV. refers to dowries and bride-prices as well. Limitations on the field of choice in marriage are few indeed. Marriage connections with the Dasyuvarṇa people with whom the Āryans came into contact in India, must of course have been banned. The marriage of brother and sister,

*Dowries and Bride-prices. Restrictions on marriage.*

father and daughter only were prohibited. I, 124, 7, and IV, 3, 2 etc. show that monogamy was chiefly prevalent. Polygamy, however, seems to have existed side by side from X, 145 which has a prayer for the discomfiture of co-wives; very probably it was confined to kings and rich men. There is hardly any reference to polyandry.

*Polygamy.*

When the widow is asked to get down from the funeral pyre of her husband, upon which she is lying (X, 18, 8), a practice similar to that of the Suttee seems to be hinted at. Different views are held on the subject of the prevalence of this custom in the ṚV. age. One view and a reasonable one is that *it was neither compulsory nor very common in this age* (even the oldest law-literature treats of the widow's right of inheritance) because X, 40, 2[1] mentions the circumstances in which a widow (in all probability childless) was to keep connection with her brother-in-law until the birth of a son.

*Suttee.*

*Remarriage.*

The marriage-hymn shows that if the husband was the master of the 'new' house, the wife was the mistress and shared control over the servants, the unmarried brothers and sisters of the husband and over the whole establishment generally. She participated with her husband in the ritual of the soma sacrifice-a right denied to her in the later Smṛitis. Women publicly attended feasts and dances and there is a reference in the ṚV

*Woman's position.*

1. Quoted in Ghate's Lectures on the ṚV. P. 193.

to beautiful women flocking to a festival gathering.[1] The other side of the picture should not however be ignored; the wife was subject to the control of the husband and remained under the guardianship of the father before marriage, of the husband after marriage and of her brothers in the absence of marriage.

## PART 2 THE PERIOD OF THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

According to Mr. Vaidya,[2] the Atharva-Veda version of the marriage-Sūkta in the ṚV. introduces a variation *viz.* that the taking of the bride's hand took place in the bride's house and not in the house of the bride-groom as in the ṚV. The AV. version adds a new feature which became so essential later (*e. g.* in the G. S.), *viz.* the bride-groom asking the bride to set her foot upon a stone. Consummation again, became a part of rhe ceremony, following almost immediately, as in the Gṛihya-Sūtras it takes place on the 4th night of marriage. The pomp of the ceremony and parading of the marriage-gifts in a procession (repeated from the ṚV. original) continue to be features of the ceremony.

*The ceremony.*

*The field of matrimonial choice.*

Marriages within the circle of agnates and cognates were gradually banned but the prohibition extended only to relations of the third or fourth degree (as in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa). The instances of Kavasha and Vatsa

1. Winternitz; History of Indian literature p. 67.

2. History of Vedic literature.

as well as that of Jāna-śruti in the Chhāndogya-Upanishad who offers his daughter in marriage to a Brahmin indicate that atleast Brahmins and Rājanyas could marry women of lower castes including the Śūdra.[1] The Tāṇḍya Br. however, looks with disfavour upon such progeny of Śūdra women. Pratiloma marriages were probably not allowed.

*Early marriages ?*

That late marriages were not rare is perhaps to be inferred from the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka ( 1,27 ) reference to pregnant Kumārīs.

*Polygamy.*

Polygamy became perhaps in this period a commoner practice among kings and rich men.

*Woman's position.*

Woman was gradually losing her high position in this period. Male progeny was definitely preferred to female one. The Aitareya Br. declares that a daughter is a source of misery and that a son is the saviour of the family. The A. V. deplores the birth of daughters and according to Macdonell [2] the Yajurveda speaks of the practise of exposing girls when born. Widowhood was much dreaded (T. B.). There may be many reasons for this preference to males *e. g.* in the incessant and inevitable struggles of the advancing Āryans with the resisting aborigines, a male member of the family was useful as a defender of the home and an ally but a female one without being anything of the kind was on the contrary a burden; whatever the hypothesis, the fact is indisputable.

1. Cambridge history of India Vol. 1.
2. History of Sanskrit Literature.

## PART 3 ŚRAUTA-SŪTRAS & PĀṆINI.

That late marriages were common and that abortions were brought about if in exceptional cases some unmarried girls went astray, is seen from the enumeration of 'Bhrūṇahatyā' embryo-killing as a heinous sin. Remarriage of widows as a regular practice did not exist even in this period. Mr. C. V. Vaidya[1] points out that Pāṇini does not know the word "Punarbhū" which came into vogue probably with the system of early marriages and its corollary, early widowhood. Similarly the Abhivādana-rules in Pāṇini, according to the same scholar, show that the presence of wives of the lower castes in a family and the inevitable association of the higher-caste-ladies with these in the house-hold as a consequence of the Anuloma marriage-system, brought down the general level of womanly culture and led to their deterioriation in social status.

## PART 4 GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS

### Section (A) The ceremony

Before we proceed to draw our conclusions on this topic from the description of the marriage ceremony and other scattered references direct or indirect to the position of woman in the G. S. literature it would be convenient to give a summary of the essential features of the ceremony as described in the various G. S.

The Ā. G. S. is the one which mentions the eight different forms of marriage described in the

1. History of Vedic literature.

Dharma-Sūtras of Vasishṭha, Āpastamba and Baudhāyana and the Smṛtis of Manu, Yājñavalkya etc. (1). When the father puts ornaments on the person of his daughter; pours out a libation of water and then gives away the girl that is the Brāhma kind of marriage (As it is difficult to distinguish this form of marriage from the others, from this bare account, we add distinguishing characteristics given in the Dharma-Sūtras) (a) there is an inquiry regarding the family of the bride-groom, (b) the bride-groom must have a high character and learning, (c) the bride-groom asks for the bride though Manu differs and says "Āhūya Dānam Kanyāyāḥ" III, 27 *i. e.* the bride-groom has to be approached by the father. (2). If the girl with ornaments on, is given in marriage to an officiating priest while he is doing duty at a Śrauta sacrifice, that is known as the Daiva form of marriage. (3). In the Prājāpatya type, the father offers the girl with the words "Practice Dharma together" (The parallel passage in Baudhāyana adds "clothing and decking of the bride" as common details. As there is hardly anything distinguishing this form from other forms of marriage, the parallel passage in Vishṇu-Smṛiti may yield ad isting uishing feature *viz.* that the girl is demanded by the suitor who approaches the father or as Haradatta in his commentry on Gautama Dh. S. IV, 15–16 points out the implications of the instruction mentioned above, are: that the bride-groom is expressly bound down not to enter another Āśrama or to marry another wife). (4) When the marriage takes place after a bull and a cow are given as gifts to the girl's father, that is the Ārsha form of

marriage. We see the very faintest beginnings of bride-price in this gift, though bride-price as such is expressly condemned. The male offspring in the case of the four types of marriage described above are supposed to sanctify twelve, ten, eight and seven descendents and ancestors on either side respectively. (5) When the bridegroom marries the bride after gladdening the father with money that is the Āsura type. (6) If the girl and the lover consult only themselves and none else and marry after a private mutual agreement, that is the Gāndharva (or love) marriage. (7) If the girl is carried off while her relatives are sleeping or are indifferent that is the Paiśācha wedding. (Intercourse with the bride in an unconscious or sleeping condition taking place against the wishes of her relatives is, it seems, followed by a formal marriage in this case). (8) If the girl who is crying, is abducted after a fight with her relatives in which they are either defeated or killed, that is the Rākshasa form of marriage. The fact that only the Ā. G. S. gives the eight forms (and that too rather abruptly in the midst of a general account of marriage) as well as the fact that the Laugākshi (Or Kāthaka G. S.) and the Mānava G. S. mention only two forms *viz.* the Brāhma and Śaulka or Brāhma and Āsura show that the recognition of some of these forms atleast *e. g.* the Paiśācha and the Rākshasa was late and is even then almost a puzzle. Mr. C. V. Vaidya in his Epic India offers the only plausible explanation: The first four forms of marriage marked the different stages of the development of the institution among the Āryans of India. The Devas were the remote ancestors. The Prajapatis, were the patriarchs and the Ṛishis the immediate

ancestors of the Indo-Aryans; while the Brāhma form of marriage was its last development amongst the Brahmanical Āryans of the Gangetic valley. The Āsura form was so called because it prevailed, among the Asuras or the ancient Irāṇians. The Gāndharva form was a custom of the Gandharvas, an aboriginal race (or a tribe in the North-West ? ) and the Rākshasa form probably prevailed among the Rākshasas (a hostile tribe) and not among the Āryans. The Rākshasa and Gāndharva forms were thus taken over by the Āryans from the original inhabitants and permitted to the Kshatriyas only. The Paiśācha form was prevalent probably among the Piśāchas a wild and uncivilised aboriginal race which lived on human corpses, the theory being that a woman on whom a rape had been committed was irrevokably the wife of the guilty man. It was thus that even such low types of unions were honoured with the name of 'marriages' (Epic India pp. 92 to 96).

*The time for marriage.*

The time for marriage is when the period of studentship or Brahmacharya is over. The student takes a bath signifying the end of studentship, returns home from the teacher's house and takes up the duty of supporting his parents. With their permission he proceeds to get married. The auspicious time for the ceremony is the Uttarāyaṇa, the bright fort-night and an auspicious Nakshatra, such as the Uttarā-phalgunī, Uttarāshāḍhā or Uttarā-bhādrapadā or any of the two constellations following each of these three, or Svātī, Mṛigaśiras or Rohiṇī and an auspicious day (According to Āp. all seasons are proper for marriage excepting the two months of the Śiśira season and the last month of the

hot one). Morning, fore-noon, mid-day, after-noon or evening: any of these five periods are auspicious for marriage according to H.

*The selection of the bride and the bride-groom.*

The girl to be selected should have proportionate limbs, smooth hair and two curls at her neck because such a girl will give birth to six sons. Ā. adds the characteristics of intelligence, beauty; good character and freedom from disease. Āp. says that the girl should be of good family, good health and should attract his mind and eyes. He also gives a list of disqualifications in the bride. A girl that sleeps too much, is given to crying, has left home, has been betrothed already to another, who is closely guarded by her relatives, who looks wicked or is a hunchback, of monstrous appearance or bald-headed, a girl whose skin is like that of a frog, who has gone over to another family, has too many friends or has a fine younger sister or whose age is too near to that of the bride-groom must be avoided. Girls who have the names of a Nakshatra, of a river or a tree are objectionable. All girls in whose names the last letter but one is *r* or *l* should be avoided. Above all the girl should be a "Nagnikā" (literally naked) *i. e.* who has not yet had the monthly period or whose breasts are not developed.

*The bride-groom.*

The bride-groom should be a young man having intelligence, a good character and auspicious bodily marks. Learning and good health are necessary accomplishments for a bride-groom but a good family is the most important qualification, (Bh. G. S.).

*The Gaṇa-gotra rule.*

The girl should belong to the same caste, as a rule and the same country and belong to a different Gotra from that of her husband (H). The girl should not be a sapiṇḍa relation of his mother ( Sapiṇḍa relationship ceases with the fifth or seventh degree). The families of the intended bride or bride-groom must be well examined. Those families are best, which on their mother's as well as their father's side, through ten generations are famous for austerities, meritorious deeds and learning. This of course, seems to be a mere ideal as it is not possible in every case. ( Three wives are allowed to a Brahmin, two to a Kshatriya, one to a Vaiśya in the order of the castes and one Śūdra wife to all, without Mantras at the marriage ceremonies.).

*The examination of the bride.*

As the above-mentioned characteristics are rather hard to discover (Ā) and as it is possible that he may not find a person who will be able to give a judgment on these matters (G) the following curious mystical procedure was to be adopted. The wooer according to (G) is to take eight earth-clods from an altar, a furrow, a pool (which does not dry up), a cow-stable, a place where four roads meet, a gambling-place, a place where corpses are burnt, a barren spot and a ninth earth-clod with a mixture of earth from all these places. These balls of earth should be made of equal size and after making secret marks on them, let him ask the girl to choose one of these. If she chooses any of the first four she should be approved and also if she picks up the mixed one according to some (G). Ā.

supplies the reasons for this approval. In case she chooses any of the last four she is to be rejected. The reasons are:—If she chooses the earth-clod gathered from an altar (Vedi), her offspring will be rich in holy lustre; if one from a field (that is, the 'furrow' of Gobhila) giving two crops in one year, she will be rich in food: if from a pool which does not dry up, rich in every thing; if from a cow-stable, rich in cattle. If from a place where four roads meet, she will be an unsteady woman wandering in all directions; if from a gambling place, addicted to gambling; if from a crematory, bringing death to her husband; and if from a barren spot, she will be poor or barren. Āp. proposes a similar but rather simpler test. A number of objects hidden from her view are to be placed before the girl *viz.* (1). different kinds of seeds mixed together, symbolical of offspring, (2) loose earth taken from a sacrificial altar, (3) an earth-clod from a field, (4) cow-dung, (5) and an earth-clod from a cemetary. If she touches any of the above objects except the last one she is to be approved of but rejected if she touches the last one. Similar tests with slight changes in the nature or source of the earth-clods are described in the Mānava and Kāṭhaka Gṛihya-Sūtras.

*The wooers go to the girl's house.*

In a few Gṛihya-Sūtras only is there a reference to the custom of sending the wooers to the girl's house but Ā (1, 7, 1, & 2) says "Different indeed are the customs of the different countries and different villages; one must observe these *i. e.* local customs at a marriage ceremony. We can only state what it commonly accepted as universal custom". So very

probably the duty of examining the bride described in the last paragraph was entrusted to the wooers explicitly mentioned in a few Gṛihya-Sūtras. According to Āp. the wooers who go to the girl's house are sent out under the Invakā Nakshatra. The wooers are generally the bride-groom's father and others (S) or his friends who have assembled (Āp.). Vedic verses are to be recited over them before they go. S. tells us that when they arrive at the house of the girl's father, they take flowers, fruit, barley and a pot of water and announce themselves thrice as "Here we are, Sir" (in order to distinguish themselves perhaps from others who also crowd there to see the festivities); after this they ask for the girl in marriage, declaring their Gotra names, the hosts turning their faces to the east and the visitors to the west. When the girl is approved of and the marriage is agreed upon by both the parties, the wooers touch a vessel in which have been put flowers, fried grain, barley and gold and recite a Vedic verse over it. Then the Āchārya of the girl's family standing up places the vessel on her head, repeating a Vedic prayer for offspring to her. According to Āp. the bride-groom himself also sees the bride and seizing the Darbha blade with his thumb and fore-finger wipes with it, the part of her face between the eye-brows and utters a Vedic verse if any omen occurs.

*The bride-groom sacrifices when the bride's father has given the formal consent.*

When the girl's father has declared his agreement, the bride-groom offers a sacrifice where the "Āvāpa" or special characteristical offerings are accompanied by words like "May Agni give to me so and so as my wife", or "Some is rich in wives, may he make me

rich in wives" etc. (S). Between the betrothal and the marriage ceremony, an interval is some times allowed according to the convenience of the parties, though generally the ceremony followed immediately.

*The bride is bathed.*

Early in the morning of the first day of the marriage-celebrations the bride is washed up to her head with water that has been made fragrant by all sorts of herbs and the choicest fruits together with scents. According to Āp. the bride-groom places a round piece of Darbha net-work on her head, on that a right yoke-hole and on that, a piece of gold and then pours water over her so that the water runs over that gold piece and passes through the yoke-hole. For fetching this bath-water an even number of persons from among those assembled are sent. After the bath a newly dyed garment which has not been used is put on her body. According to G. after she is washed with water in which Klītaka, barley, and beans are thrown, a friend should sprinkle her three times over the head so that her whole body becomes wet, with Śurā of a very superior quality (*i. e.* prepared from molasses) and then the female relatives of the bride wash her private parts.

*Dance of four or eight women.*

Then the Āchārya of the bride's family sacrifices with the Maha-Vyāhṛitis and then offers Ājya oblations to deities including Indrāṇī; the bride sitting down behind the fire takes hold of him while he is sacrificing. Then four or eight women not widows are entertained with vegetable, Surā and other food and

are requested to perform a dance four times. This is called the Indrāṇī-karma, the Brahmins being feasted as usual at the end.

*The bride-groom goes to the girl's house.*

The bride-groom who has taken a bath and for whom auspicious ceremonies including the offering of Ājya oblations to the deities mentioned above have been performed, is escorted by happy young women, not widows, to the girl's house (here an Argha with the killing of a cow is offered to him according to S. I. 12. 10.). The bride-groom is not to behave rudely to these women unless they have offered him forbidden food or offended him in any other manner.

*The gift of a garment, unguent & mirror to the bride.*

After the bath described already the bride-groom gives the bride a garment (According to P. he makes her put on a lower and an upper garment). He then takes up the Salve-box and the anointing of the bride and the bride-groom is done by a third person (the bride's father or some other relative) though a commentator thinks that the bride-groom himself anoints the eyes of the girl. Then he gives into her hands the quill of a porcupine and a string of three twisted threads and a mirror into her left hand. Her relations tie to her body a red and black woolen or linen cord with three amulet gems. The bride-groom however ties to her body only Madhūka flowers. According to G. the bride soon after the gift of a garment pushes aside with her foot a rush-mat or some-thing

like that and then sits down on the eastern end of it. According to P. it is the bride-groom that pushes off a bundle of grass or mat to the west of the fire and sits down upon it.

The Gṛihya-sūtras do not clearly put down the exact place in the order of ceremonies, of the Kanyā-pradāna ceremony. Only P. puts it down at this point and says: the bride-groom signifies a formal acceptance of the offer.

*The formal Kanyā-pradāna.*

The bride-groom then makes the bride sit down behind the fire and while she takes hold of him or touches him (which is symbolic of participation) he makes three oblations with each of the Mahāvyāhṛitis and a fourth with the three recited together. The father or brother sacrifices an oblation with the point of a sword or with the Sruva on the head of the bride. According to P. he also makes oblations with the Rāshṭrabhṛit formulae and the Jaya and Abhyātāna formulae if he likes.

*Sacrifice with the Mahā-Vyāhṛities, and other formulae.*

The bride-groom then clasps with his right hand, the right hand of the bride with the thumb, both hands with their palms being turned upwards and he stands while she is sitting (according to the commentator, four Brahmins should then repeat the 'Sūryā hymn' to the bride). "Then he goes on saying "This am I. That art thou"? "The earth thou, the heaven I? The Sāman I, the Rik thou

*The Pāṇigrahaṇa: going round the Stheya water.*

etc." The Āchārya then fills a new water-pot and throws into it branches with milky juice, of a tree with a masculine name along with Kusá grass and gold and hands over the pot to a pupil who remains holding it. The couple then walk round this '*Stheya*' water. (Gandharva, Soma and Indra are according to the accompanying verses quoted in H, her first three husbands and the human husband is the fourth. There are further prayers made at this point by the bride-groom for ten sons to his wife so that he may be the elventh male in the family). According to Ā.H. Āp. he then seizes her thumb if he desires that only male children should be born to him, her other fingers if he is desirous of female children; her hand on the hair-side together with the thumb if desirous of both male and female children. G. adds here a direction for the putting up of her joined hands with his left hand before seizing the thumb with the right hand. He takes her hand (according to Āp.) so as just to touch her thumb and the little hair on her hand.

*The treading on the stone.*

The Āchārya then places a stone in the northern direction and then the bride-groom makes the bride rise and makes her tread with the tip of her right foot on the stone with a prayer like "Like a stone be firm" "tread the foes down, defeat the enemies" (S.Ā.P.). The stone is generally an upper mill-stone placed in the north near the fire before the ceremonies commence.

He then leads her round the fire so that their right

*The circumambulation of the fire.*

sides are turned towards it and gives her a second garment (S). The leading round, the treading on the stone and the sacrifice of fride grain described below are repeated thrice with mantras and silently for the fourth time if he likes.

*The sacrifice of fried grains.*

The father or the brother of the bried or some one acting for them, pours fried grains out of a basket of fried grains grains mixed with Śamī leaves into her joined hands. This is done either from a basket or from his own joined hands filled with fried grains. The majority of the Gṛihya-sūtras ( S. Ā. G. H. ĀP.) prescribe at this point what is technically called the Upastaraṇa (or the spreading under) and the Pratyabhighāraṇa (the sprinkling over,) with Ājya *i. e.* Ājya is sprinkled first into her joined hands, then fried or roasted grains are poured twice over them ( or thrice for descendants of the Jamadagnigotra) and then Ājya is poured over the fried grains. The bride then sacrifices the fried grain into the fire without opening her joined hands. These operations ( viz. the Pariṇayana, Aśmārohṇa and Lājāhoma ) as already said, are repeated four times. The exact order of these three operations differs in the different Gṛihya-sūtras but they go together so far as their repetition is prescribed; only H. lays down that only the circumambulation and the sacrifice of fried grains are to be repeated thrice because the treading on the stone preceeds the Pāṇigrahaṇa in his ceremonial order.

*The seven steps or Sapta-padī.*

After this comes the important ceremony "the Sapta-padī" which sets the seal on marriage according to modern notions. The Āchārya (according to the commentator Nārāyaṇa) makes them both walk seven steps ( or he or the bride-groom makes her take the seven steps ) in a north-eastern or northern direction repeating a Mantra like "With one step procure sap, juice with two steps, wealth with three, comfort with four, cattle with five, long life with six and friendship with seven steps" ( P. G. ) [ The Āchārya then appeases those seven steps with water by wiping them with the Stheya-water and sprinkles the remaining water on their heads and then follow the gifts. S ]. According to Ā, the bride-groom first loosens two locks of hair of the bride and then causes her to take these seven steps. G. adds that the right foot is to be placed first and never the left one before the right. After the seventh step the bride is to remain standing in that very position and the bride-groom repeats prayers like "May I not be separated from this friendship". The sprinkling on the head is done by the Āchārya or the bride-groom and is done with water from the Stheya-pot which is held on his shoulders silently by a man or a student all the time from the moment of their beginning the seven steps. The bride-groom then makes the bride look at the sun, touches her heart, reciting "Into my mind do I take thy heart" etc. and then touches the navel. He then addresses the assembled people with words like "Auspicious ornaments does this woman wear! Come up and

behold her! Go back to your houses after having brought luck to her ". It appears according to H. that the assembled people pour or throw rice-seeds on the heads of the couple at this stage (as is the modern custom).

*The bride is taken to her new home. The looking at the polar star etc.*

Different practices and orders are recommended by different Gṛihya-sutras in connection with the ceremonial that follows now. (1). Ā. says that on the night of the Pāṇi-grahaṇa, Pariṇaya, Lājā-home and Sapta-Padī ceremonies, the bride should remain in the house of an old Brahmin woman whose husband and children are alive and when she sees the polar star, the Arundhatī star and the Sapta-ṛishis (the Ursa-Major), she is to break the silence and say " May my husband live and I get offspring ". Ā. then adds that *if the newly married couple have to make a journey* to their new home, let him make her mount the car with the verse " May Pūshan guide us safe "–While

*The journey to the new home.*

the bride-groom is taking the bride to the new home in a chariot, if they come across a river they get down and cross the river in a ship or boat reciting verses while they do the descending from and the ascending of the chariot and the boat. Verses are to be recited when beautiful places, trees or cross-ways are met with. At every dwelling-place they pass on their way, let the husband observe the on-lookers repeating appropriate verses and then on entering their new home assign a proper place to the nuptial fire which is all the

time carried by them. Oblations are offered while the bride sits on a bull's hide. He partakes of curds, gives something of that to her and then besmears his heart as well as hers with the remaining Ājya. (2). The bride-groom takes her away in a north-easterly direction and there establishes the nuptial fire in a Brahmin's house, spreads out to the west of the fire, a red-bull's hide with the hair outside and the neck to the east and should make the bride who is observing silence sit down upon that. And when it is reported that a star has appeared he should ( while she touches him ) make oblations of Ājya with the Sruva, picking out portions of it with appropriate Mantras. The remnants he should pour out over the bride's head. Then having circumambulated the fire so that their right sides are turned towards it, he shows her the Polar-star and the Arundhatī star after going out of the house. The bride then breaks her silence by respectfully calling out her Gurus by their Gotra-names and when the sacrificial fee has been paid the Arghya ceremony is performed either here or when they go to their new home. (3). S. adds a few more interesting details regarding the journey. If the bride begins to cry while leaving her father's house a Ṛig.-Vedic verse is to be recited. She smears the axle of the chariot, the two wheels and the two bulls and puts into each of the pin-holes a branch of a fruit-bearing tree with appropriate verses. The besmearing of the bulls is also accompanied by the recitation of a verse. If any part of the chariot breaks or bursts on the way, the bride is to be taken to the house of one who

*Description according to Kh. G. S.*

keeps the sacred fire and the damage is to be repaired ( according to G. in case an accident happens, they should put wood on the nuptial fire, should make Ājya oblations and should substitute a new piece or part for the damaged one besmearing it with the remnants of the Ājya ). Verses are again to be muttered or the '*Vāmadevya*' to be sung when she remounts the chariot or when a cross-way, a grave-yard, or a big tree are met with and also when a river is being crossed, with the car harnessed or unharnessed. (4). P. adds the following details when the journey is over. A strong man snatches her up from the ground and sets her down, in an eastern or nothern direction in an out-of-the-way house and here whatever the villagers advise is to be done and the Polar-star is shown to the bride after sun-set. If the polar star is not visible let her recite a verse. (5) G. says: after the Pāṇi-grahaṇa the bride is carried away to the convenient house of a Brahmin situated in a north-easterly direction. When the bride has reached the house, Brahmin women of good character with husbands and children living should help her to descend from the chariot, should make her sit down on a bull's hide, should place a boy in her lap and into the joined hands of the boy they should throw lotus-roots or fruit and when the boy rises she should sacrifice the so-called "Firm" Ājya oblations, eight in number and then put a piece of wood on the fire and respectfully salute the Gurus according to their seniority. (6). H. has the following new details. When the couple reach their new house, the bride-groom says to the bride "Do not stand on the thresh-hold, cross it

with your right foot first." The sacrifice in the nuptial fire then takes place in the hall in its easterly portion; further, it is not merely the Polar and other stars that are worshipped but the moon also by the couple after going out of the house. Then he talks to any person he likes outside and returns to the house and causes her to sacrifice a Sthālīpāka or a mess of cooked food. (7). Āp. has only a few novel details, *viz.* the bride-groom's spreading out two threads in the wheel-track of the chariot a dark blue one in the right and a red one in the left and then his walking on these threads, before the chariot passes over the tracks. The confusion of the sequence of the various ceremonies in the different Gṛihya-sūtras may be cleared up thus:-When the Pāṇi-grahaṇa, the Sapta-padī, the Lājā-homa and the Pariṇayana and the Śilārohaṇa have taken place the bride is carried first to a Brahmin's house instead of, to the bride-groom's house. In this house, the sacrifice of Ājya oblations takes place and then the pointing out of the stars etc, and then follows the Arghya reception and from hence the couple journey in a chariot to the bride-groom's house straight off after the ceremonies (and there the pointing out of the stars etc. takes place outside the house if it has not been done already) and then the Sthālīpāka is offered in the nuptial fire. According to Āp. she is either taken off or carried in a chariot to the bride-groom's house and then the Aṛundhatī-darśana outside and Sthālīpāka offering inside in the nuptial fire takes place. In, S, the bride goes in a chariot, reaches the bride-groom's house and then a sacrifice is offered in the nuptial fire in front of the house. Before formally entering the bride-groom's house the bride's eyes are besmeared with Ājya salve, her

hair are touched and the remainder poured on the head, and a boy is placed on her laps. On entering the house they eat curds together and then the stars etc, are pointed out, when they appear. In Ā. they dwell in the house of a Brahmin woman that night and the stars are pointed out here and then follows the journey in a chariot to the bride-groom's house and it is in the bride-groom's house that the besmearing with Ājya etc. takes place. In P. a strong man snatches her from the ground, sets her in an eastern or northern direction, in an out-of-the-way house on a red bull's hide and here what the villagers ask them to do is done. The marriage gifts are given and then the pointing out of the stars takes place after sunset. The journey in a chariot to the new home is also referred to. It is not clear as to exactly when the Kanyā-pradāna takes place. In Pāraskara the handing over of the garments and the anointing etc, preceed the Kanyā-pradāna. The sacrifice however which the couple performs together seems to imply that he has already received the bride from her father. Therefore the Agniparinaya. the Saptapadı etc. follow the Kanyā-pradāna and presuppose the bride-groom's power over his wife and an exercise of it (S. B. E. XXIX, p. 34).

*The place of the Kanyā-pradāna in the sequence.*

The couple is to refrain from conjugal intercourse for a period of three nights after the marriage, sleeping on the ground, eating no saline or pungent food, drinking milk only and wearing ornaments. This minimum period of three nights could be extended according to

*The three nights after the Gṛiha-*

*pravéśa, or house-entry.* custom or individual inclination to six or twelve nights or even one year because we are told "after one year's chastity a Ṛishi is born." Between their sleeping places, a staff is interposed which is anointed with perfumes and wrapped round with a garment or thread (Āp.). During this period they are to serve the nuptial fire in the evening and morning-a service which is obligatory hereafter and eat boiled rice with curds, together. The first food which he eats during the period should be food fit for sacrifice and one over which he has murmured a Vedic verse or he should on the following days prepare a mess of cooked food of which they eat together. He takes that food out of the vessel, spreads it out and touches it with a verse, then he eats it and gives the rest to his wife. For ten days they are not to leave their home (S).

According to S. when the three nights have passed he makes offerings of cooked food-8 oblations in all, with invocations for the destruction of any evil in the wife such as sonlessness, death-bringing to husband or cattle etc. At the time of her monthly period, he pounds the root of the Adhyāṇḍa plant and sprinkles the juice into her right nostril with appropriate verses. He then touches her, when he is about to cohabit with her. When he has finished, he murmurs verses like 'Open thy womb; take in the man's sperm, may a male child be born, the most excellent of his kin." Ā. only says that after having intercourse, the bride's shift is given to the Brāhmaṇa who knows the Sūryā hymn and food to other Brāhmaṇas who prono-

*The rites of the 4th day: the co-habitation*

unce blessings. (P). In the fourth night (after the wedding) towards morning the husband establishes the sacred fire within the house, cooks a mess of sacrificial food, and sacrifices Ājya oblations with similar prayers to Sūrya, Agni etc. Each time after sacrificing, he pours the remainder of the oblations into the water-pot and he besprinkles her on her head with water from that pot. (The bride is besmeared up to the ends of her hair and nails according to G. & Kh. with the remainder of those Ājya oblations poured into a water-pot. The bride-groom should then remove that water and Ājya by rubbing her with the mixture and finally wash her with the words "The evil substance which dwells in thee bringing death to thy husband, children, cattle, fame etc. *that* I change into one that brings death to thy paramour"). Then he makes her eat the mess of cooked food. After he has led her to his house, he should cohabit with her after each of her monthly periods, or as he likes, He then touches her heart (reaching it) over her right shoulder with his hand. If she does not conceive he should fast, under the Pushya Nakshatra, lay down (in his house) the root of a white blooming siṁhī plant and on the 4th day, after the wife has bathed, he should in the night time, crush it in water and insert it into her right nostril and then cohabit. The time for cohabitation is after the three nights of the wedding or after she has had her monthly illness and the blood has ceased to flow. With his right hand, he touches her secret parts with "May Vishṇu make thy womb ready" and then cohabits. According to H. in the fourth night towards morning the bride-groom putting wood on the fire, performs

the regular ceremonies down to the expiatory oblations and then offering nine expiatory oblations to Agni and Vāyu and repeating verses like "Drive away the death-bringing elements in her" etc. pours the remainder as an oblation on her head, walks round the fire and a water-pot placed near it, makes the wife lie down to the west of fire facing the east or the north and then touches her secret parts. He cohabits with her, embracing her, sucking her mouth with his mouth, with appropriate formulae. A woman having her monthly intercourse, keeps through a period of three nights observances like those prescribed for example in the Taittirīya Saṁhitā, II, 5, 15, 6 viz. ," no talking, sitting with any-body etc;" and then she takes a bath, wears a clean dress and ornaments, talks to a Brāhmaṇa and then is called by the husband with verses like "May Vishṇu make thy womb ready". These Mantras are to be repeated whenever they cohabit. according to Ātreya; only the first time and after her monthly courses according to Bādarāyana. Ā. adds that union on each following night with an even number from the fourth (after the beginning of her monthly illness) and till the sixteenth, brings more and more excellent offspring to them, if such a night is chosen for the (*first*) cohabiting after her menstrual period.

## Section "B".

The description of the marriage ceremony given above purposely includes that of the Garbhādhāna though it is important enough to be reckoned as a separate sacrament because evidence for the age of the bride is

*The age of the bride.*

forthcoming in the fact that the G. S. as a rule describe the Garbhādhāna ceremony as *following the marriage ceremony almost immediately i. e.* after three nights (Compare S. 1, 17,4 and 5 where the three nights of chastity and the 4th night of consummation follow the pointing out of the polar star.) Ā. gives the option of a period of chastity of three or twelve nights or one year immediately after marriage but simply to ensure the birth of a noble offspring and without reference to the age of the bride at marriage which is taken for granted as the age admitting of consummation three nights after the marriage ceremony. Similarly Pāraskara refers to the consummation night as the 4th night (it being taken for granted that it is the 4th night after marriage). Gohila mentions a difference of opinion regarding the time for cohabiting which may come after three nights have passed after marriage or after she has had her monthly course. But here also *there is no hint of any waiting for the girl's attainment of maturity* but merely a waiting for the completion of the menstrual period which is expected within a month of the marriage ceremony. In fact the rites of the fourth day including the consummation are called "Chaturthī-karman" the rites of the fourth night" which refers *to a definite point of time after marriage.* The Āpastamba G. S. is however absolutely unambiguous on the point, e. g. in III, 8, (7 to 10) it says "Let him notice the day on which he brings his wife home (bringing the wife home is a part of the marriage ceremony). From that day through three nights they should be chaste and then on the 4th night, the consummation" etc. The Laugākshi (Kāṭhaka).

*A different view*

Gṛihya–Sūtra however says "Daśavārshikam Brahmacharyam Kumariṇam, dvādaśavārshikam vā" and prescribes the 11th or 13th year as the year for marriage. Again the word "Nagnikā" ( in the H. & G. and other Gṛihya S. ) used in the description of the girl to be selected means according to the Gṛihya-saṁgraha, "one who has not yet had the monthly period or whose breasts are not yet developed" and this interpretation of the word is rendered almost certain by the parallel passages in Vasishṭha, Gautama, and other Dharma–sūtras. On the other hand the Vedic Mantras addressed to the bride speak more of her progeny than anything else which shows that, if she is not already mature, her maturity period could not be far distant. Similarly the mantras that she has to recite during the ceremony presuppose the power of understanding their meaning on her part. Another evidence of age may be found in the fact that when the Sthālīpāka ( a mess of cooked food ) is to be sacrificed by the bride in the house of the husband immediately after looking at and praying to the polar star and other stars, it is the wife that husks the rice-grains of which that Sthālīpāka is prepared and cooks that Sthālīpāka. So we might draw one safe conclusion from these statements. The Gṛihya–Sūtras were composed at different periods of time. In the early period, girls were married when they were fit for consummation almost immediately after marriage whereas later on, the rule that the marriage must take place while the girl is a 'Nagnikā' came gradually to have a binding force as the rules in the Dharma–sūtras show.

## Section "C"

### Polygamy.

In H. G. and S. the prayer to the polar star in the marriage ceremony runs:- "With the man who knows the Polar star as the firm, immoveable Brahman, will dwell a large family, *wives*, servants, pupils, etc". Polygamy is thus definitely indicated. In S. the characteristics offerings (Āvāpa) of the sacrifice that the bridegroom offers when the assent has been declared by the bride's father are accompanied by the words " May Agni give so and so, to me as my wife. Soma is rich in wives, may he make me rich in wives etc ". The Āp. has among the rites for realizing specific wishes or for averting misfortunes, one to be performed by the wife to bring her co-wives under her control (III, 5 and 8). But the most direct and explicit reference to polygamy is that in P. who sanctions the (later well-known) Anuloma system of intermarriages among the castes". Three wives are allowed to a Brāhmaṇa: a Brahmin wife, a Kshatriya wife and a Vaiśya one; two (a Kshatriya and Vaiśya) to a Kshatriya; one (a Vaiśya) to a Vaiśya and in addition a Śūdra wife for all, who is to be married without any Vedic mantras at the marriage ceremony. This is supported also by the prohibition elsewhere of a Śūdra wife to an observer of the Jyeshṭha sāma-vrata. But this does not mean that Ekapatnītva (having one wife) was not admired and appreciated. Seats of honour are prepared in the Upākarma ceremony for the "Ūrdhvaretobhya Eka-patnībhyaḥ" (Those men of pure conduct devoted to one wife).

## Section "D"

### Bride-price and dowry.

The fact that the Manu-smṛiti in one breath condemns Śulka (bride-price) and in another lays down rules to regulate the system shows that in those days this undesirable system was in vogue. It would be therefore interesting to see the state of things in the G. S.

Among the eight forms of marriage described only by Āśvalāyana, there is one, the Āsura form of marriage, in which the bride-groom marries the bride after gladdening the father with money. The Laugāhshi or Kāṭhaka G. S. mentions only two, the Brāhma and the Āsura and the Mānava Gṛihya-Sūtra mentions the Brāhma and Śaulka forms. This shows that human nature was pretty much the same and that the Śaulka or Āsura system of marriage was in vogue. The gift of a bull and a cow to the girl's father in the Ārsha form of marriage was very probably a subtle though mild form of Śaulka.

*Dowry system.*

Dowry in the sense of money, goods or estate which a woman brings to her husband in marriage can be traced (faintly though), in the "Alṁkṛitya Sutādānam" (or "decking the girl with ornaments before giving her away") which is an important item of procedure expressly mentioned in the chief forms of marriage *viz.* the Brāhma and Daiva and implied in the Prājāpatya one.

Is there a reference to bride-price in the rule given

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by both S. & P that "A hundred (cows) with a chariot (he gives) to a 'Duhitṛimat' father (who has only daughters)? Or is the gift intended merely to destory the guilt incurred by marrying a girl who has no brother? If 'Duhitṛimat' only means "He who gives his daughter in marriage *i. e.* the bride's father" (as the S. B. E. editor puts it) then surely this gift will amount to purchase-price.

## Section "E".

### Marriage--a spiritual union.

Marriage according to the Gṛihya-sūtras is not a contract entered into by two contracting parties but *a spiritual union*, a holy bond of unity. The words addressed to the bride, just after the Saptapadī are ( "mama vrate to hṛidayam dadhāni, mama chittam anu-chittam te astu" ) "Into my will, I take thy heart, thy mind shall follow my mind". The bride-groom makes the bride tread on a stone with the verse (H. G. S.) "Tread on this stone, like a stone be firm". The wife on entering the house of her husband was supposed to bring prosperity to bipeds and quadrupeds. The spiritual character of the union is well brought out in the prayers uttered after the Pāṇigrahaṇa (in K. G. S.) "Soma acquired thee first (as his wife). He then gave her to the Gandharva and the Gandharva has given her to Agni and Agni gives me cattle and children and thee besides". *The wife thus is a god-given gift.* The Sapta-padī (or walking seven steps together) was symbolical of eternal and close friendship. The prayer to the Polar star expresses a yearning for the constancy of the wife. Fide-

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lity to the husband is chiefly invoked and insisted on in the cohabitation-rite which follows immediately after marriage, in prayers like "What dwells in thee, that is death-bringing to thy husband, that I make death-bringing to thy paramours". One prayer in the Garbhādhāna ritual is significant in this connection: "The Magic charm of concord that belongs to the Chakravāka birds, thereby we are concordant". (In S. G. S.) when the girl is approved of and the match fixed, the Āchārya (the priest of the girl's family) gives a blessing which reflects the ideal of conjugal life. "I put into thee, offspring, cattle, splendour and holy lustre". G. G. S. tells us that in case the husband is unable to do so, the wife may offer the morning and evening oblations; for the wife is, as it were, "The house" and the fire is the "Domestic Fire".

*Progeny the chief goal of marriage.*

In the description of the marriage ceremony, quite a large number of prayers recited by the bride-groom or the priest refer to the future offspring of the wife e. g. (in H.G.S.) we have "May Agni release the offspring of this wife from the fetters of death. May king Varuna grant that this wife may not weep over distress (falling to her lot through her sons.)' May Agni lead her offspring to old age. With fertile womb, may she be delighted in her son" etc. Again further "Mayest thou shine in thy husband's world, beholding thy genial offspring" "May Savitṛi protect thy suckling sons." "Childlessness, the death of sons, I take (from thee) as a wreath is taken from the head" "with this prayer, I kill the Piśāchas that dwell

in thy womb ". Though male progeny was invariably preferred, the desire for female children was not entirely absent e. g. (in H. I, 20. 1) in the Pāṇigrahaṇa description we have "If he desires to generate male children, let him seize her thumb; if he desires female children, her other fingeres; if he desires both male and female children, let him seize the thumb together with the other fingers (so as to seize the hand) upto the hair (on the hair-side of the hand). After the Pāṇigrahaṇa one text recited by the bride-groom over the bride, is " Bountiful Indra! Bless this woman with sons and with a happy lot. Give her ten sons, let her husband be the eleventh ". This shows that *quite a number of sons* were desired. The prayers at the Garbhādhāna again, for a " Hero son ", the most valiant of his kin, perfect in every limb, has a ring of sincerity and earnestness about it. It would be more accurate to say therefore that male progeny rather than (progeny merely) was the aim of marriage. The whole Puṁsavana ceremony and the mantras recited at the Garbhādhāna show the keen and burnning desire of the ancient Aryans for male progeny. One such Mantra (in S.) reads " Imparting the birth of females to other (women), may he (Savitar) put here a man ". The implements used and the Nakshatra to be selected for the Sīmantonnayana, should be of male gender, the object being evidently to secure the birth of a male child. In P. we are told that a wife who desires to conceive should offer the first oblation with a particular mantra. The cohabiting is recommended after each of the monthly periods of the wife or as he likes, until a child is born. Further on again in the

Vaiśvadeva *ceremony* and other ceremonies, prayers for offsprings are to be met with. If she does not conceive within the expected time, then a rite is prescribed chiefly consisting of the pouring of the juice of the Simbī plant into the wife's right nostril. This same anxiety to ensure male progeny to the bride is reflected in the act of placing a son on her lap when she reaches her husband's house after marriage in a chariot, wherefrom she is helped to descend, only by a Brāhmaṇa woman with husband *and children living*. Not merely in the Puṁsavana but also in the Sīmantonnayana and other pregnancy-sacraments, the prayers go up for " A motherhood of living sons ". In the Soshyantihoma in Gobhila ( the sacrifice for the woman in labour ) when the child is appearing a Vedic verse is recited, "A male he will be born so and so by name ". *So, persistently till the last moment, will-power is being exerted for procuring a male child.* " When they announce to him that a son has been born, he should say etc. " this description of the Jātakarman takes it for granted that a son has been born !

## Section " F "

### The position of the wife or the woman in general.

From the above section " Progeny the aim of marriage " it will be pretty clear that the ancient Āryans of those days were, if not actually hostile to, certainly not very enthusiastic about the birth of female children. In fact so great is the anxiety to have male children that not only is there a special sacrament

for the purpose but prayers are offered in all the other sacraments right upto the birth of the child, for sons. In fact, as noted already the hope for it dies hard. This may partly be accounted for by the fact that in the unsettled conditions of those days when the Āryans had to carry on almost incessant warfare with the aborigines, the male additions to the family were certainly welcome as not only placing no further responsibility for protection but actually reducing it. However it must be acknowledged that to a certain extent this was also due to the comparatively inferior position of the woman who owing to her defenceless position was a burden to the family. But inspite of this, evidence is not wanting to show that a woman was certainly an honoured and valued member of the family and an indispensable partner in the religious ritual. The marriage discription leaves no doubt about this.

*Her honoured position.*

After making the bride tread on a stone in the marriage ceremony (*e. g.* in P) the bride-groom sings a song, " That song will I sing to-day which will be the highest glory of women ". The married wife was supposed to be auspicious and to bring prosperity to the bipeds and the quadrupeds of the house. The fact that in the marriage ceremony, the bride was taken out of the house when the stars appear, to do homage to the directions, to the polar and other stars, shows the absence of the *purdah system.* Pointing in the same direction are other indications such as for instance, the people being invited to have a look at the auspicious

bride etc. The woman is supposed to be the harbinger of prosperity to the home of the husband as the Āchārya of the girl's family says when the match is fixed "I put into thee, offspring, cattle, splendour and holy lustre."* A life of merriment, pleasure and free social intercourse was certainly not denied to women as is seen from the custom mentioned in S. of requesting four or eight women who are not widows to dance four times after being regaled with food, lumps of vegetables and surā in commemoration of the fixing up of the match and the custom of the bride-groom being escorted by happy young women who are not widows to the bride's house. In, the sīmantonnayana ceremony (according to S) the husband is to request her to sing merrily, wearing if she likes many gold ornaments. Quite a number of sacraments the woman has a right to, only they are to be performed silently without vedic recitations (*e. g.* the Chūḍākarman, Godāna and Annaprāśāna are performed for girls ?). A girl or a wife devoted to her husband was regarded as holy from the fact that in G. the pounding of a Nyagrodha shoot which is to be inserted into the right nostril of the wife in the Puṁsavana is to be done by a student, *a wife devoted to her husband*, a Brahmin or a *girl*. Āpastamba pays a great compliment to women as authorities in custom and practices in his rule that "One should learn from women, what ceremonies are required by custom in marriage." Again Gobhila says "Even the wife may offer the morning and evening oblations, for, the wife is as it were "the house and that fire is the domestic fire" as quoted above. Very interesting is a rite to be performed by the wife to bring her

husband under her control (Āp). This shows that '*husbands under the control of their wives*' was not an uncommon phenomenon. Very great attention and love was claimed by the wife from the husband who was to treat her himself with young lotus-leaves in case of consumption or other illness.

*Her Inferiority complex.*

Let us now put forth evidence of the inferiority complex. There was a ban on the free participation of widows on festive occasions *e. g.* the women who are to be regaled with food etc. and made to dance when the match is arranged are to be those *who are not widows.* Similarly happy young women *who are not widows* are to escort the bride-groom to the bride's house. A woman in confinement or menses is impure as a neighbour or even as a sight for a student reciting the vedas. A Snātaka is not to eat together with his wife, nor talk to a woman confined or in menses. An aged Brāhmaṇa woman with *husband* and children *living* was an important personage because the bride and the bride-groom pass the night of the Saptapadī and other ceremonies in her house and her advice is to be followed in the Sīmantonnayana ceremony. This shows that one with a dead husband was not valued. The woman is scruplously kept aloof from the recitation of vedic mantras; many a sacrament that is performed in her case is done silently. It is only in the marriage ceremony that she is allowed to recite vedic mantras and in case she does not do so through shyness the bridegroom is to do it on her behalf. The Upanayana or Initiation is not for females and when the bride is

described as 'Yajñopavītinī' (in G.), the commentator is right when he says that her outer garment is arranged like a sacrificial cord, *i. e.* passing over her left shoulder and under her right arm. When the head of the family returns home, he kisses his son's head with Mantras and that of the girl silently; similarly the wife is not to offer the oblations in the Upākarma and Utsarga homas.

## Section "G".

### Corroborative Dharma-Sūtra evidence.

*Suttee.*

The fact that the Dharma-sūtras treat of a widow's rights in the property of her husband show clearly that suttee was not compulsory.

*Remarriage & illicit progeny.*

The son of a remarried woman is one of the twelve kinds of sons in the Vasishṭha and Baudhāyana Dharma-Sūtras. Vasishṭha Dh. S. XVII, 72 to 74 speak of the remarriage of women whose husbands die after betrothal, who have been abducted and not regularly married and whose husbands have died *after marriage but before consummation*. Similarly the same Sutra (XVII, 20) defines a "Punarbhū as one-who marries another, after leaving an important, outcast or mad husband or after his death. Among the twelve kinds of sons mentioned above, are the Niyogaja (born of an appointed wife or widow); one born of an unmarried girl; *the son of a girl married pregnant* (or Sahoḍha) and a secretly born one. All this shows that there is no age ancient or modern, which does not furnish examples (however rare) of moral weaknesses such as humanity is liable to!

# Chapter III.

## Family Life

### PART I. ṚV. PERIOD.

The Patriarchal family was the basis of social life. Parents had absolute control over children as suggested in ṚV. I. 24, 12 and V. 5.2 where find the rudiments of the Śunaḥśepa story. After the death of the father, the elder brother took charge of the younger ones. The family discipline was pretty strict, as is evident from the blinding of Ṛijrāśva by his father (I. 116).) Though this may be an extreme case, ṚV, X, 34.4 where the father, mother and brothers of the insolvent gambler declare "We know him not, lead him away bound" shows that discipline was by no means lax. The relation between the child and parent was of close affection, nevertheless. The joint family system prevailed as seen from verses in the wedding hymn (X, 85) where we are told, the newly married wife (subject to the authority of the husband) rules over her brothers-in-law and to some extent over the parents of the husband also although she on her part is to remain in awe of them. Does X, 34,2 "My mother-in-law hates me, my wife drives me away" in the gambling-hymn show that the joint family comprised sometimes even the wife's mother, and others ?

*Family discipline.*

*The joint family.*

The birth of sons was preferred to that of daughters. Abundance of sons is constantly prayed for along with

*Preference for sons.*

cattle and land but no desire for daughters is expressed in the RV. The continuity of the family line was so keenly desired that adoption of sons seems to have been known in the absence of natural born ones (VII,4,7,8).

## PART 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS & BRĀHMAṆAS.

We meet with the same picture of family life in this period as in the preceeding one. The Aitareya Br. has an elaborate version of the ŚunaḥŚepa legend of which there is just a hint or two in the ṚV. as noted above. The word Bhrātṛīvya" is repeatedly used in the Brāhmaṇas in the sense of "An enemy." Is this a reminiscence of the old enmity between the Iranians and the Āryans or is it a natural consequence of the inevitable quarrels over the inheritance of joint property among brothers and cousins, now that the Āryans were gradually settling down to a life of plenty in the fertile tracts of Āryā-varta ?

## PART 3. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

Normally the family was a joint one, the seniormost married member or house-holder being the head but partitions often took place, as is seen from the directions regarding the kindling of the domestic fire, the occasions for which were the time of the division of the inheritance or the death of the family-head in which case the eldest son kindled it. A very magnanimous picture is drawn of the duties of the head of the family towards the other members. After the Vaiśvadeva and the Baliharaṇa, he was to see first that alms of food were given to a begging student, then that a female under his protection, or a pregnant one, children and very old persons in

his house were given food and then and then only he was to dine. He is not to dine alone or before others and was to cut off a portion of everything he ate and offer it as a Bali. Children or persons of noble families residing with him as guests were never to be neglected. Seniority in age was a claim for respect in the family. In the Pratyavarohana ceremony (signifying the giving up of the high couch) while lying down on their sides on the layers of grass on the ground, the position of the family-member was determined by seniority of age the eldest one to the right side and so on. That the joint family was sometimes big enough to necessitate cooking at different kitchens, though there was no partition, is seen from the rules about Vaiśvadeva-Bali (G):-*viz.* that the Bali-haraṇa need not be repeated, every time food was cooked; but should be offered once only from the kitchen of the chief householder or the head of the family; or he whose food is ready first, may offer the prescribed portion in the fire, give the Brāhmaṇa his share of food and then dine himself, without waiting for the Baliharaṇa of the head of the family. The rest then may simply dine without the Baliharaṇa. The rite prescribed for one desirous of a large family shows that birth-control ideas had yet to be born! That male additions to the family were preferred to female ones has been noted in the preceding chapter. There was a difference in the manner in which the father returning from a journey, greeted the male and the female children in the family.

## Chapter IV.

### Political Life.

#### PART I. THE ṚV PERIOD.

*Political Structure.*

According to Macdonell (History of Sanskrit Literature) the Vedic Āryans were split up into numerous tribes, which though conscious of a unity in race, religion and languages were as often at war with one another as at peace. The tribe was the political unit. The tribe consisted of a number of settlements (Viśaḥ) which again were formed of an aggregate of villages (Grāma). The Grāma was protected against invaders and inundations by means of fortified enclosures (pūr) made on eminences. There is no clear evidence of the existence of towns.

*The tribe under one ruler.*

Different views are held on the subject of the *hereditary or elective character* of kingship. Mr. Vaidya holds that the Rāshṭra or tribe elected its king whereas Dr. Keith thinks that this kingship was generally hereditary. What appears probable, is that although normally the son succeeded the father as king, the settlements or districts (Viśaḥ) constituting the Rāshṭra had the right to displace a king with whom they were dissatisfied and to elect or rather select a substitute from the family of the king or nobles–a right often

*Kingship hereditary or elective?*

*The power of the king.*

exercised. The king protected the people and received tributes from conquered tribes and voluntary gifts (*but no taxes*?) from his subjects. Sabhās and Samitis (Popular assemblies) formed checks on the power of the king. The most important among the kings counsellers was the Purohita who often accompanied the king to battle and helped him by prayers and spells as is seen from the Vasishṭha hymns of the 7th. Maṇḍala. The Dānastutis show that kings gave liberal gifts to their Purohitas.

*Administration of justice.*

There is no direct mention of the administration of justice by the king assisted by a body of legal-advisers as was the later practice and the fact can only be inferred. Theft, burglary and highway robbery are among the crimes recorded. A common crime was robbery which often was of the nature of cattle-lifting at night. The many prayers in the ṚV. for protection and safety at home, abroad and on journeys show that decoits and high-way-men were not unknown. Tying the criminal to a stake with a cord was a common form of punishment.

*The art of war.*

The king and his warriors fought from chariots. The chief weapon was the bow, drawn to the ear and then discharged. The arrows were tipped with metal points or poisoned horns. The warrior wore a coat of mail and helmet made of metal ('copper' and later 'iron') as well as arm-guards to save his arm from the friction of the bow-string; spears and axes are frequently mentioned.

Although riding on horse-back is known, cavalry is not mentioned.

## PART 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

*The political structure.*

The descriptions of the Aśvamedha and Rāja-sūya sacrifices performed by kings seem to imply the existence of great kingdoms, if not empires but Dr. Keith[1] thinks that although the tribal kingdoms of the ṚV may have grown in size by expansion or mutual amalgamation, there were no great kingdoms even in this period, nor was city life much developed. The grāmaṇīs (head of villages: corresponding to the modern village patels) are referred to in the Tai. Br. as belonging to the Vaiśya caste.

*Power of the king.*

There are in the A. V. hymns for the coronation of kings as well as for celebrating *the return of exiled kings. So the people had the power to punish kings.* The states or political units were called Rāshṭras (nations) and not Rājyas (kingdoms) which also shows the importance of the people. We get an idea of how alliances were formed to check the tyranny of a king in the description of a sacrifice in the Tāṇḍya Br. (6, 6, 5) whereby the Brahmins helped the Vaiśyas to destroy the king.

*Judicial administration.*

The exact procedure is not known but the king is often described as wielding the rod (Daṇḍa) of justice. A grāmyavādin or village-judge seems to be empowered to try petty village cases. In the list of sins are mentioned serious crimes like the killing

1 The Cambridge History of India Vol. 1,

of an embryo, the murder of a Brahmin etc. The Chhāndogya Up. mentions, by way of illustration the case of a man blindfolded, abducted and then released in a deserted place, after being looted and finally finding his way to the Gāndhāra country after making inquiries in village after village on the way. Mr. Vaidya[1] points out that this means that even in those days, the North-West Frontier tribes beyond Gāndhāra or Kandāhār were given to abduction and dacoity; such crimes were absent, however, in the centre because Aśvapati kekaya makes the boast (Chhāndogya-Up.) *that there were no thiefs or adulterers in his kingdom.* For *evidence* eye-witnesses were regarded as more important than *tell-tales* but ordeals were looked upon as valid tests of innocence or guilt (Cf. the ordeal for theft in the Chhāndogya-Up. ). The methods of punishment were rather severe, death or cutting off of hands for theft etc.

*Arts of war.*

As regards the art of war, hardly anything *new* turns up. Rathins or car-warriors are mentioned but whether the elephants formed part of the army cannot be definitely known.

## PART 3-ŚRAUTA SŪTRAS & PĀṆINI

Samrāṭs or emperors ruled in the east: so we hear of big kingdoms for the first time now. The king had an advisory council or Parishad to help him in the administration. The description of sacrifices performed by Rājanyas and Viśaḥ for supreme power shows that power

1. History of Vedic Literature: p. 177

was not confined to the royal class but often changed hands.

## PART 4. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

*No Empire ?*

The Gṛihya-Sūtras do not betray any definite indications of the existence of an empire or the presence of a sovereign ruler although the argument of non-mention is not valid. On the other hand, they seem to hint at the existence of petty principalities 'kingdoms, or rulerships when they lay down the rule that the death of a ruler causes an Anadhyāya (G) *for one day only.* In the sīmantonnayana ceremony, similarly, the husband says to two lute-players "Sing ye to the king or any one else more valiant." This indicates the absence of a powerful overlord.

*The judicial department,*

The Courts of justice are referred to in connection with the Vaśīkaraṇa rite for winning the Court and its assembly to one's side against one's adversaries and for appeasing the angry judge or depriving him of his speech (so that no judgement may be delivered !). Offenders were properly dealt with and capital punishment was in vogue as 'execution—grounds' are referred to. Legalities are occasionally touched upon in the G. Sūtras when we read of the division of the inheritance as an occasion for kindling the domestic fire or of the rule that the site of a house should be undisputed property, but law or Dharma is the proper sphere of the Dharma-Sūtras and hence we cannot expect any more legal references in the Gṛihya-Sūtras.

Turning to the military side of the king's life we see that every king kept an army. S. lays down that no vedic recitations were to take place 'in the camp of an army' but when ritual invades the battle-field, the result is somewhat funny. In Ā. III, 12 for example we find that ritual dictates military tactics also to the king? The whole description is interesting:—The Purohita standing to the west of the king's chariot repeats appropriate verses, while he makes the king put on this armour and hands over to him his bow and quiver, and when he actually starts for battle, the Purohita recites verses over the horses, while the king looks at the arrows, and when he fastens the leather-guard on the king's arm. The Purohita accompanied the king to battle in his chariot and he or the king mutters verses while the latter touches the drum, shoots off the arrows and *is engaged in battle*!

*Ritual invades the battle-field!*

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# Chapter V.

## Dress and Decoration.

### PART 1. ṚV. PERIOD

The Dress consisted of two garments, the upper and the lower. It is not certain whether these were made of cotton. They were made of sheep's wool or skin and sometimes of barks of trees, perhaps. Fine garments are often mentioned and these were a luxury being of different colours and adorned with gold. Among the ornaments are mentioned anklets, bracelets, and earrings worn by *both the sexes* and usually made of gold; garlands were also worn. Different fashions of keeping the hair that were oiled, anointed and combed are mentioned. Beards were kept, though shaving was known along with its indispensable accompaniments, the razor, hot water etc. Women plaited their hair and some men also wore their hair braided and wound like a shell *e.g.* the Vasishṭhas wore them braided on the right side of the head.

*The two garments*

*Ornaments.*

*Hair-dressing.*

### PART. 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

Woolen and silk garments and garments dyed with saffron are mentioned. Gilded cloth as trappings for the elephants and jewels and gold are referred to in the Ait Br. Women's ornaments were valued as Dakshiṇā gifts.

The A. V. mentions a comb with a 100 teeth and gives remedies for strengthening and restoring the hair-growth.

## PART. 3. ŚRAUTA-SŪTRAS AND PĀṆINI.

The Ushṇīsha or turban is mentioned. Red turbans and clothes were used for magic rites and silk ( Kshauma ) ones were recommended for sacrificial purposes as holy. The[1] Āprapadīna-paṭa of Pāṇini is a garment which covers the body up to the ankle and his anupadīna upānah is a shoe that fits the foot. A śikhā or chūdā (a tuft of hair) was worn on the head but clean-shaven heads were also common.

## PART 4. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### Section " A " The Principal Dress.

The principal dress of the Āryans of the Gṛihya-Sūtra period consisted of two pieces of cloth, one the Uttarīya or upper garment and the other the Antarīya or lower garment because according to the H.G.S. these two with the Mekhalā or girdle constituted the dress and a staff completed the outfit of a Snātaka and a student also. That this was also the dress of the females is clear from references to marraige descriptions (*e. g.* in Pāraskara). The lower garment is put on first and then the upper one ( Cf. the description of the dress of the snātaka in the H. G. S ). Pāraskara adds that if there is only one garment then a part of the lower garment may be turned into an upper one. In the case of a student, (according to the H.G.S.), very holy upper garments are

1 Vaidya. H. V. L.

the skin of a deer or an antelope, for a Brahmin; the skin of the Ruru deer, for a Kshatriya; and that of a he-goat for the Vaiśya. That a turban was the ceremonial head-wear is clear from S. G. S. where we are told that the student is to wear a turban while the teacher recites to him the Āraṇyaka texts (particularly the Mahānāmnī verses in the fourth Āraṇyaka of the Aitareyins). That this was a longish piece of cloth wrapped in a formal manner as a turban or in an informal manner to veil the head is clear from the veiling of *the head spoken of with reference to the* head of the Snātaka in the same G. S. Besides a turban is always mentioned in the dress and general outfit of a Snātaka (P.Ā.S. etc).

## Section "B".

### Dress-material & Decoration.

*Material of dress.*

Woolen clothes were in common use *e. g.* a skirt or a flake of wool are among the things to be offered to the fathers with each Piṇḍa in the H.G.S. where woolen blankets are also mentioned. That cotton, linen, hempen and woolen cloth was used is clear from the list of garments prescribed for the Upanīta (in Gobhila & Ā) Silk was also used though rarely. (The Kośakāra or silkworm is known). That skins and hides of animals were regularly used as upper garments atleast by the students is clear from the prescription that the skins of antelopes, spotted deer and goats or cows were to be used as upper garments respectively by the students of the three castes in order or a cow's hide may do for students of all castes.

As regards dyes and colours it may be pointed out that the student could wear an upper garment dyed with (according to H.) the juice of Lodhra flowers or with madder or 'Nīlyādinā' ('indigo', Ā. G. S); the latter two dyes are forbidden for a Snātaka. Black colour for clothes also seems to be in fashion as dark clothes are forbidden for the Śākvaravratin (Ā.G.S) Ā. prescribes specially dyed garments for the Upanīta a reddish-yellow garment for the Brahmin; a light red one for the Kshatriya and a yellow one for the Vaiśya.

*Dyed cloth*

The art of washing is quite well-known and it is rather curious to find that a particular sanctity attaches to brand—new or 'Ahata' garments which latter expression can only mean new and unused garments that have not reached the stage of washing.

*Washing*

## Section "C".

### The General Personal Outfit.

A bamboo-staff, shoes and a parasol, complete the general outfit of a Snātaka who has put on a pair of garments, a turban and ear—rings (S.G.S.). We are told in the Ā. G. S. that when the Snātaka takes up the Veṇudaṇḍa it is a security against enemies, thieves, serpents and beasts of prey, Rākshasas Piśāchas and fear from human beings. It is thus a weapon of self-defence not only in the ordinary physical sense but in a mystical sense also. When it is taken up, it is moved thrice from left to right and revolved

*The Staff.*

over the head and if it falls, is picked up with the recitation of a mantra. As regards the composition of the staff for a newly initiated student different G.S. prescribe different materials or wood of different trees. Thus S.G.S, lays down that the staff of a Brahmin shall be made of Palāśa or Bilva wood; that of a Kshatriya of Nyagrodha and that of a Vaiśya, of Udumbara wood. The Ā.G.S. prescribes Udumbara wood for the Kshatriya and Bilva wood for the Vaiśya. Whatever the difference in the assignment of a particular type of wood for a particular caste, we get an idea of the composition of the staff in general. When again different heights for the staff are prescribed for the three Varṇas, we atleast understand that much care was bestowed upon the staff, an in tegral part of the student's uniform. We get an idea finally of the *form* of the staff from the instruction in one G. S. that the staff a Rājanya is made of a branch of the Nyagrodha tree so that the downward-turned end of the branch forms the tip of the staff.

*Shoes.*

*The umbrella.*

The invocation to the shoe not to pinch (Ā. G. S.) shows that shoes in all countries and at all times have a tendency to pinch! The umbrella is prayed to as " Bṛihaspati's or Brahman's or heaven's covering " and then requested to shelter the student from evil but not from glory.

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## Section "D".

### Hair-Dressing.

That very great care and attention was bestowed on hair-dressing and hair-cutting by the ancient Āryans

is seen from the numerous prescriptions regarding hair-arrangement which forms an integral part of two important Saṁskāras *viz.* the Chuḍākarman and the Godāna. It is rather interesting to notice that the tonsorial art in particular was in a highly cultivated stage. The hair were shaved off in a formal manner with great ceremony in the beginning of the Upanayana ceremony as well as in the Snāna ceremony (signifying the end of studentship) and for this purpose the tonsorial artist the barber was invariably requisitioned. The details of the tonsorial operations are given in connection with the Chūḍākarman and Godāna sacraments (*e. g.* in the H. G. S.). A lump of bull's dung or a layer of Kuśa grass is kept ready to receive the cut-off hair. Hot and cold water is then mixed and with this, after the tangled locks of the boy are loosened with a porcupine's quill and the hair are anointed with fresh butter, the hair near the right ear (Dakshiṇam, godānam) are moistened; or butter, ghee or curds are mixed with the water which is then applied. A herb with its tip or point upwards is then put into the hair. Then the herb is touched with the razor which is prayed "Not to harm him". The razor (*i. e.* the handle) is made of copper or udumbara wood. Then the barber begins plying the razor on the head of the boy. The razor makes a sound while it is being so plied (were they like the modern hollow-ground razors that make a delectable sound while being plied?) and the shaving goes on from left to right. "Heard by the Gods, I shave that (hair)" is the verse from the Taitt. Saṁ. quoted in H. G. S. in this connection. Then the other sides of his head are moistened from left to right and

the back, the left and the front hair are shaved in order. After the shaving of the hair, the locks that are left over are arranged according to custom or family usage. Then a kindly-disposed person gathers the (cut-off) hair and buries them in a cow-stable or near an udumbara tree in a clump of Darbha grass. Then a gift is given to a Brahmin and boiled rice with butter to the barber. It is to be noted that in this ceremony the boy sits in the laps of the mother and the father does the moistening of the hair, the holding of the mirror and the moving forwad of the razor either without cutting or only with the formal and symbolical cutting of the hair-ends and then the barber steps in as a substitute:-the barber who is asked to have the arrangement of the locks according to the custom. Some elementary knowledge of the tonsorial art is assumed therefore in the case of every householder ( father ). The Godāna rite which is performed in the 16th or 18th year is almost indentical with that of the Chūḍākarman with this difference that instead of the hair on the head only, the hair and the beard and the hair under the armpits, ( G. G. S. ) and the nails are cut off. There is a difference of opinion as regards the top-lock ( H. G. S. ), whether it is to be retained or cut at the Godāna ceremony and then allowed to grow; because the top-lock is often referred to and though a complete shaving off was not prohibited as now, keeping a hairless head was not the fashion. The minuteness of the details is rather interesting ( Ā. G. S. ). The hair are cut four times on the right side and 3 times on the left and 3 Kuśa bunches are to be inserted into the hair each time before cutting. The shaving operation is described again in detail in connection with the Snāna. Some more interesting details

in the H. G. S. are the following:—"The Axe is thy father, do not harm me" is the prayer addressed to the razor which shows that razor-cuts were common! The barber is addressed "Brighten up my face, O. barber, do not cut off my life", which shows that the shaving operation was regarded as essential for beautifying the face and there is the cunning suggestion that the life of the person being shaved was for the time being in the hands (skilful or often otherwise) of the barber! The order of cutting the hair here given is the beard, then the sides, then the hair (long) and then the small hair and then the nails. That a great option was allowed as regards the frequency or otherwise of shaving ordinarily, is seen from the rule in P. G. S. "The youth should observe chastity and should not be shaved for one year, twelve nights, six nights or atleast 3 nights and according to some there was to be no shaving between the Upākarma and the Utsarga ceremonies. This means perhaps that shaving was looked upon as a luxury!

As regards women it is in S. and Ā. that we find the almost (to us) shocking prescription that the rites of the Chūḍākarman and Godāna are to be performed silently for girls! But one curious thing is the novel information that the Sīmantonnayana ceremony gives us, regarding the parting of hair. As the ceremony of the parting of hair, took place only in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th or 8th month of the woman's pregnancy, does it follow that unmarried girls and even married ones who had not borne children did not part their hair as now? In this ceremony the wife takes a bath in the morning, sits on Darbha facing the east, and

then the husband standing behind her ties an Udumbara branch to her neck and then parts her hair upward, first with Darbha blades, then with a splinter of Vīratara wood, then with a full spindle and finally with a porcupine's quill that has three white spots and which appears to be the hair-comb of the ancient Āryans !

**Section "E".**

The Toilet in General.

The toilet of the ancient Āryans was not quite as simple as we are apt to imagine. Collyrium ( Añjana ) for the eyes and other salves for anointing the body with ( Abhyañjana ), are among the gifts that accompany each Piṇḍa (H. G. S.). ĀP. G. S. mentions Sthagara-a fragrant substance offered to the serpents in the Sarpabali. The application of sandal ( Chandana ) is often referred to. All these toilet-requisites are mentioned prinicipally in connection with the Snāna or bath which the student takes at the end of his studies and after which he becomes a Snātaka and is then qualified to establish a house-hold by marrying. In the course of this Snāna, after the shaving, the teeth are washed or brushed with an Udumbara stick and the bath-powder (snānīya-chūrṇa) applied to the body; the bath is then taken with water that is neither very hot nor very cold (just tepid). Then the friends bring him all sorts of perfumes or ground sandal-wood. These are besprinkled with water and then he is anointed with this salve of sandal-wood (P. G. S. mentions the use of a salve for the nose and mouth after the bath). Then a garland is worn after the Kuṇḍalas are put on and then he anoints himself with the Traikakuda salve ( coming from the

Trikakud mountain ?) born on the Himalayas and then he looks into a mirror. So there are things corresponding to the soap and the face-and-other powders of modern times ! Again we get a description of toilet in connecttion with the bathing of the bride in a marriage. In S. G. S. we are told that before the bride is taken to the bride-groom's house, she is washed up to her head with water that has been rendered fragrant with all scents. The use of the salve-box for anointing the bride after this bath and articles like a mirror, a porcupine-quill ( representing the hair-comb ) a string of three twisted threads which are put by the bride-groom into the hands of the bride and the red and black woolen or linen cord with three amulet gems which the relations tie to her body and the garland of Madhūka flowers which the bride-groom ties to her body at the ceremony of marriage: all this shows how elaborate were the notions of decoration and toilet which include the besmearing of the eyes also ( The bride's eyes *e.g.* are smeared with the Āgya-salve, the remainder of which is poured on her head ). The Anulepana or salving seems to be a rather popular part of the toilet as it is frequently mentioned and there are instructions about it in the description of the Snātaka's general decoration ( Ā. G. ). After salving the two hands, the Brahmin Snātaka should salve his head first; a Rājanya, his two arms; a Vaiśya his belly; a woman her secret parts ( here of course it is salving in general that seems to be described and not the salving of a woman-snātaka ? ) and a person who gains his livelihood by running, his thighs. This description seems to suggest that the head and arms are the

most prominent parts of a Brahmin and Kshatriya respectively and the belly that of the Vaiśya (Cf. the modern–Śethiā whose sedentary habits give him a bulging belly). Again that flower-garlands were composed in a variety of ways is clear from the necessity of the Snātaka distinguishing a srak (a wreath) from a garland (mālā) which he is not to use.

## Section "F".

### Ornaments.

In the description of the Samāvartana rite, we are told in (H. G. S.) that the Snātaka puts on two ear-rings and a perforated pellet of sandal-wood or of Badara wood, overlaid with gold (at its aperture). This pellet is to be tied to his neck. Similarly in the Āp. G. S., the Snātaka takes a gold pellet with its setting ("Maṇim Sauvarṇam sopadhānam") which is strung on a string moves it in water, and then ties it to his neck. In the same way a pellet of Badara wood (Bādaramaṇi) is to be tied to his left hand. We get an idea thus of atleast three ornaments worn by males and perhaps they were worn by the females also though a definite statement on this point is wanting.

A general reference to female ornaments is found in the various forms of marriage described by Aśvalāyana " He may give away the girl, having decked her with ornaments " is the common prescription in the Brāhma and Daiva forms of marriage. Gold and silver, a jewel to be tied round the neck (these precious metals as well as stones) must have been known and the absence

of a detailed description in the Gṛihya-sūtras cannot mean anything as occasions for their mention or detailed description are few and far between. In the Sīmantonnayana ceremony (S. G. S.) the wife is asked to sing merrily wearing if she likes many ornaments (Mahāhemavatīm vā gāyayet).

## Section "G"

A summary.

Finally we may wind up with a very succinct summary of the normal dress and decoration of the ancient Āryans in the very words of the Ā. Gṛihya-sūtra. "A pair of garments, a jewel (to be tied round the neck), two ear-rings, a parasol, a pair of shoes, a staff, a wreath, pounded seeds of the karañja fruit for rubbing with (Unmardanaṁ) eye-salve and ointment";—this is the full equipment, in matters of dress, decoration and toilet in general.

# Chapter VI.

## Magic in the Ritual. Some superstitions

### PART I. THF ṚV. PERIOD.

Dr. Keith observes[1] "Magic and sacrifice represent two different aspects of man's efforts to accomplish his desires. They are essentially distinct and are felt to be so in the higher faiths. But in primitive religions, the elements lie side by side, in no strongly felt differentiation" and later "With very few expections, the Ṛg-veda is a book in which magic is not dealt with. A few late hymns are indeed found there, but these stand out as exceptions in a religious milieu. The man who is pure complains that he is called a magician and a companion of evil spirits (Ṛv. VII. 104, 16)". The few hymns that are associated with magic are: I.191 is a hymn intended to act as a spell against vermin; V. 55 is meant to induce sleep; X, 58and 60,7—12 are meant to bring back the life of one apparently dead, X.163 is a spell to stamp out the disease yakshmā; X. 166 to destroy enemies; X,185 to procure children; X.162 to destroy the demon killing progeny and X.145 is a spell to oust a cowife from a husband's favours. Other hymns there are to secure protection from the Yātudhānas and Rākshasas. The cry of an owl was considered inauspicious and the ṚV has a prayer to remove the sin of having killed a kapota or wild pigeon.

*General Characteristies.*

*Magic.*

1. H.O.S. Vol. 32 P.379n.

## PART 2. THE LATER SAMHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

To quote Dr. Keith again[1], "The Atharva-veda is a book of magic mingled with some theosophy; that it is priestly magic and not popular magic uninfluenced by the priests is clear. The Brāhmaṇas show beyond the possibility of doubt that the whole of the sacrifice was penetrated by the conception of magic. *Scarcely any rite but can be so adapted as to produce Magic ends.*" Not to speak then of the AV which is professedly a book of magic, the Ait Br. contains the "Brāhmaṇa parimara." rite to kill enemies and other similar rites in the first half. The Taitt. Āraṇyaka gives mantras (IV,26ff,) to be used against evil-doers and bad omens, for discovering a thief and to prevent wolves from killing calves etc.

## PART 3. SOME BRĀHMAṆĀ-WORKS OF THE SŪTRA PERIOD

The Sāma-vidhāna Br. belongs ( as Mr. Vaidya[2] points out) to the Sūtra-period; it just precedes the Dharma-sūtras as social conditions of the Smṛiti days are found in it. This Br. describes rites exactly in the manner of the Gṛihya-sūtras and for identical ends such as securing a hiraṇya-droṇa, killing or driving away an enemy; safe journey, cure of diseases; for procuring corn, cattle, servants, consecrating a house, victory in battle and finding out hidden treasures etc The Shaḍviṁśa Br. *also of the Sūtra period* and the Kauśika sūtra treat of evil omens and give rites for averting their evil effects. The Ṛigvidhāna Br. prescribes the same magic treatment

1. Ibid. 2, H.V. L.

of the Ṛv verses that the Sāmavidhāna Br. does for the sāmans of the S.V.

## PART 4. THE GṚIHYA—SŪTRAS.

### Section "A".

#### The Potential power of the Ritual

So implicit was the belief of the ancient Āryans in the efficacy of their ritual which practically dominated every phase of their life and so firm their faith in the almost uniimited powers of the ritual in ensuring prosperity and averting misfortunes, that quite a number of interesting ritual practices and performances were formulated for these purposes. These may be divided into two types (a) those that ensure good fortune and avert misfortunes in the near future and (b) those that are of the nature of atonements or expiations to reduce the evil effects of some ominous events that have taken place already. So complete was the process of spiritualizing or rather ritualizing life, that every stage of life from birth (rather existence in the womb) to death is marked by a corresponding sacrament and thus invested with a religious nay, even a magic significance. For a brief description of these sacraments, particularly those credited with magic powers, the sacrament of marraige-one of the most important in the whole series may be selected as the starting point. But in the chapter on 'marriage' that sacrament has

*Ritual magic in the sacraments: Marriage.*

*Garbhādhāna.*

*Puṁsavana.*

been fully described along with the immediately following Garbhādhāna-ceremony and it is evident from that description, how at every stage the prayers in the two sacraments seek to avert misfortune from conjugal life and to ensure prosperity and the birth of hero-sons. After the Garbhādhāna, comes the Puṁsavana, the ceremony to secure the birth of a male child. This ceremony is performed generally in the beginning of the third month of the first pregnancy, before the child moves in the mother's womb or when the pregnancy has become visible or in the second month or at any time in the third month. The time for it is the bright fortnight or the Pushya (Tishya) or Śravaṇa Nakshatra or any masculine or auspicious Nakshatra. In the morning, the wife sitting on northward—pointed Darbha grass is washed (all over her body including her head) and sits down to the west of the fire on northward—pointed Darbha grass facing the east. Her husband standing behind her, should reach down with his right hand over her right shoulder and should touch the uncovered place of her navel with a verse. Then the following ceremony should be performed:—Having bought (for the price of three—times-seven barley corns or beans) a Nyagrodha shoot (which has fruits on both sides, which is not dry and not touched by worms), he should plant it in a north—easterly direction. Then he should put grass around it, should take it away and place it in the open air. Then a student or a wife devoted to her husband, a Brahmin house-

holder or a girl pounds that Nyagrodha shoot on a mill-stone without moving it backward. The next morning the wife after a bath lies down to the west of the fire on northward-pointed Darbha grass with her head to the east. Her husband standing behind her should seize the pounded Nyagrodha shoot with the thumb and the fourth-finger of his right hand and should insert it into her right nostril with the verse "A man is Agni, a man is Indra." (G)

*Anvālobhana or Garbha—rakshaṇa.*

The Anvālobhana is a rite for preventing disturbances which could endanger the embryo (Ā.G.S.) and is not materially different from the Garbha-rakshaṇa ceremony (S) for the protection of the embryo performed in the 4th month, in which six oblations with a mess of cooked food are sacrificed to Agni (S).

*Sīmantonnayana.*

Even in the ceremony of Sīmantonnayana (or parting of the hair) performed in the fourth or seventh month of pregnancy, the ritual and the accompanying prayers and the song of the lute-players are supposed to ensure the fertility of the wife's womb and the birth of a hero-son. The lying-in chamber is to be besmeared with the pounded roots of certain plants to drive away the Rākshasas (S). Then follows the

*Kshipra-prasavana.*

Kshipra-prasavana ceremony, consisting of the placing of a water-pot near her head and a Turyantī plant near her feet and the touching of her body and stroking of it, which are meant to ensure a safe and speedy delivery. The Soshya-

*Soshyantī-homa.*

antī homa, the sacrifice for women in labour (in which, Darbha grass is strewn round the fire, when the child is appearing and two Ājya oblations are offered) is the next ritual which is not without a prayer for the birth of a male. The Jātakarma ceremony (an important one) performed when the child is born is described with variations in the different G.S. The main elements illustrating the belief of the ancients in the power of the ritual are enough for our purpose. When the birth of a son has been announced, before the navel-string is cut off and the mother's breast is given¶ to the child, rice and barley grains are pounded together and the father smears the tongue of the boy with the mixture with the thumb and the fourth finger of his right hand or the father breathes three times on the new-born child and then draws in his breath; then butter and barley are ground together and given to the child thrice from gold (i. e. from a golden vessel or spoon). After this with a prayer for long life (of a hundred autumns), the father gives the child (which, it is taken for granted, is a male) a name beginning with a sonant, with a vowel in it, consisting of two or four or six syllables; it should take a Kṛit (suffix), not a taddhita, This name is to be kept secret, known only to the father and the mother. (S. G. S. mentions the opinion of Māṇḍūkeya "that black, white and red hairs of an ox should be pulverized and mixed with butter, honey, curds and water and given to the child four times" as part of the Jātakarman. Ā. adds that the name should consist of two syallables,

*Jātakarman.*

*The Nāmakaraṇa*

if he is desirous of firm position; of four syllables if desirous of holy lusture but in every case with an even number (of syllables) for males and uneven number for females. It is on the 10th day that a name is given for common use, which is pleasing to the Brāhmaṇas (S) ĀP. says that the father touches the new-born child with the 'Vatsapra' hymn, takes him on his lap with another verse, addresses the child, kisses him on the head and murmurs a third verse into his right ear and gives him a secret Nakshatra name which is different from the one given to him on the 10th day and which must be of the description given above or it should contain the particle "Su", for such a name has a firm foundation. H. adds "He should give him two names for it is said (Taitt. Saṁh. VI, 3, 1, 3) "Therefore a Brahmin who has two names, will have success". He should give him the name 'Somayājin' (i. e. performer of Soma sacrifices) as his third name. The ceremony of Nāmakaraṇa is thus described in the Kh. G. S:-After a period of 10 or 100 nights or one year, the father after he has had the boy bathed, should sit down and the mother having dressed him in a clean garment, should hand him with his face turned to the north to the father. She should then walk round behind his back and should sit down towards the north. The father should (then) sacrifice and should touch the sense-organs at (the boy's) head with the (Mantra) "Who art thou"? and then should give him a name which he should tell the mother first. The belief that the production of intelligence in the child could also be brought about by the magic power of the ritual is illust-

*Medhājanana.*

rated by the Medhājanana ceremony performed soon after birth (H). With an instrument or piece of gold over which he has laid a Darbha-shoot tied (to that piece of gold) he gives to the child, (which is held so that it faces the east) ghee to eat with the formulas "Bhūḥ! I sacrifice the Ṛichas over thee"? etc. Another ceremony called 'Āyushya' ensures long life to the new-born babe and is described in the P. G. S. in great detail. "Near his navel or right ear, he murmurs "Agni is long-lived; through the trees, he is long lived. By that long life, I make thee long-lived," Similar prayers are addressed to Soma, the Brahman, the gods, the Ṛishis, the fathers, Sacrifice and the ocean. Then having placed five Brāhmaṇas towards the five regions (i. e. to the east west, north, south and in the centre) he should say to them "Breath ye upon this (child)." or the father may do it himself going round his child if he can find no Brāhmaṇas. Then he recites over the place at which the child is born "May we see a hundred autumns" etc. According to H. the prayer for long life:-"Be an axe, a stone, insuperable gold" goes up after laying an axe on a stone, a piece of gold on that axe, then turning the things upside down and then holding the boy over them. A piece of gold is tied to a hempen string and bound to the child's right hand until the mother gets up (from child-bed) as a sort of charm or amulet. After the Āyushya ceremony he recites over the mother the verse "Be thou blessed with strong children, thou who hast blessed us with a strong son", and then

*The Āyushya ceremony.*

*Charms & amulets.*

*Breast-feeding.* washes her right breast and gives it to the child and then the left breast with two appropriate verses and then puts down a pot of water near her head with a prayer to the waters to watch the confined woman and her child. According to H. the child is placed on the mother's lap with the Verse. "May consumption go to destruction"; then he utters a verse with reference to the mother "May no demon do harm to thy son" and then the washing of the breasts etc. takes place. The fumigation of

*Fumigation.* the child which goes on morning and evening until the mother gets up from child-bed is another interesting custom. The Sūtikāgni or the fire of the lying-in-chamber is to be used for this ceremony. He throws into that fire mustard-seeds mixed with grains or rice-chaff, eleven times, each time with a mantra like the following (H.):–"May Śanda and Marka, Upavīra, Śaṇḍikera, Ulūkhala, Chyabana, vanish from here! Svāhā!" A very interesting list of the names of evil spirits, demons and goblins is given in Pāraskara and Hiraṇyakeśin G.S. in this connection. After this he washes his hands and touches the boy (P) or touches the ground (H) with appropriate verses. The getting up

*The mother leaves the child-bed.* of the mother from child-bed, after ten days when the impurity falling on her at her confinement ceases, is also a ceremony (S). Father and mother wash their heads and wear new clothes which have not yet been used. The father cooks a mess of food in the Sūtikāgni ( the fire of the confinement-room ) makes oblations to the tithi of the child's birth and to

some three constellations with their presiding deities.Let him place in the middle the oblation to the constellation under which the child is born; the deity however is constantly to precede (the corresponding Nakshatra in the invocation order). Prayers for long life to the child accompany the oblations. The child's name is pronounced aloud at the tenth oblation and Brahmins are made to say auspicious words and blessings (S). Every month after the brith of the boy, for one year, or on the Parvan-days of the year (i.e. on the last Tithi of each of the three seasons) he should sacrifice to Agni and Indra, to heaven and earth and to the Viśvedevas. Having sacrificed to the deity of the Tithi and of the Nakshatra respectively he should sacrifice to the Tithi and the Nakshatra (G). S. prescribes oblations to all the Nakshatras, with their presiding deities at the end of one year (P).

*The Nishkramaṇa ceremony.*

The Nishkramaṇa or ceremony of "Going out" takes place in the fourth month, He makes (the child) look at the sun pronouncing (the verse) "That eye" (Vāj. Saṁhitā XXXVI, 24). This is practically the same ceremony as the worship of the moon performed on the third Tithi of the third bright fortnight after birth as described in G. & Kh. G. S:—The father should have the child bathed in the morning, and after sunset holding up his joined hands towards the auspicious directions of the horizon, worship the moon. The mother having dressed the son in a clean garment should hand him with his face turned to the north, to the father and should pass behind her husband's back and should station herself towards the north of her husband. He then murmurs verses praying for safety of

the child, and hands him from south to north to his mother. Then in the following bright fortnights, on the third Tithis, the father filling his joined hands with water and turning his face towards the moon worships it, letting the water flow out of his joined hands once with a Yajus verse and twice silently. The Annaprāśana or the ceremony of the first feeding with solid food which takes place in the sixth month is described in great detail in the Pāraskara G. S. The father cooks a mess of sacrificial food, sacrifices two "Ājyabhāgas" and offers Ājya oblations. After he has eaten himself, he should set apart food of all kinds, and of different flavours and should give it to his son to eat silently or with the words "Hanta" (Well!). He feeds the child with the flesh of the Bhāradvāja bird if he wishes to the child fluency of speech; with the flesh of a partridge, if abundance of norishment; with fish, if swiftness; with the flesh of the bird Kṛikasha, if long life; with the flesh of the bird Ati, if desirous of holy lustre; with all, if desirous of all, or each sort of food one by one. Then follows the feeding of the Brahmins. For the superstitions in connection with the Chūḍākaraṇa and the Godāna (shaving the beard) ceremonies, the reader is referred to a detailed description of them both in the chapter on Dress and Decoration. For those in connection with all the other sacraments, the reader is referred to a full description of them as found in the various chapters, the tables of contents giving the exact reference.

*Aṇna-prāśana.*

But the most important and interesting material in this connection is furnished by the rites for the obtain-

ment of special wishes, for averting misfortunes and the different expiations. For procuring prosperity in trade a person should cut off some portion from every article of trade and sacrifice it with an appropriate verse like "If we trade, oh Gods, trying by our wealth to acquire new wealth, may Soma thereon bestow splendour, Agni, Indra, Bṛihaspati and Īśāna ! Svāhā (H). The rite for obtaining victory in disputes or debates is as follows:—He puts wood on the fire at night-time in an inner apartment, performs the rites down to the Vyāhṛiti oblations and sacrifices small grains mixed with Ājya with an appropriate verse. Then in the presence (of his adversary) turned towards him, he murmers the verses "I take away the speech from my mouth; wheresoever thy speech, thence I take it away. Be defeated, be conquered, when thou speakest". He then touches the assembly-hall of the contest and looks at the assembly and murmurs another verse turned towards the assembly. The G. S. unblushingly and frankly describe the rites whereby one whose wife has got a paramour, should guard his wife *e. g*. the H.G.S, has;—"He should grind big centipeds into powder and should insert that powder while his wife is sleeping, into her secret parts." Many superstitions such as putting an Udumbara branch besmeared with ghee into the pits for the door—posts of a house will be found in

*Trade prosperity.*

*Definition of 'trade'*

*Victory in debates.*

*Wife's chastity.*

*House—building superstitions.*

*Business: lost articles: dangerous paths etc,*

the chapter on House—building. If a person is going out on some business, if he wants to find out something lost, if he has lost his way or is going along a dangerous path he is to recite certain appropriate Ṛik-verses to achieve his desire and avert danger (A). If a person is desirous of companions, he should sacrifice with a special formula (M,B. II.6.12).

*Association with others*

*Making property*

*Averting involuntary death*

*A hundred cart-loads of gold*

If a person wishes to be associated in friendship with another, then the fruit of a big tree over which an appropriate verse is muttered is to be given to that person (Kh.) If a person wants to make property should fast through one fortnight and on the full moon-night should plunge up to his navel, into a pool which does not dry up and should sacrifice with his mouth fried grain into the water with appropriate verses (M.B. II,4,9 to 13). To avert involuntary death, let him murmur every day the formula "Bhūḥ" (Kh.) If a man wants a hundred cart-loads of gold, he should fast through one fortnight, and feed the Brahmins with boiled rice-milk on the first day of the dark fortnight. The small grains of that rice he should sacrifice to the deities-Phala and Phalla, (day after day) at the evening twilight, on a place to the west of the village which he has besmeared with (cow-dung) observing chastity (Kh.). If he wants to acquire any villages he should go out of the village in an eastern or north-

*Acquisition of Villages.*

ern direction, should brush up an elevated surface or should raise it on a mountain with the dung of the beasts of the forest, should set it on fire, should sweep the coals away (from that surface) and should make an oblation of butter with his mouth.

*Preserving the means of livelihood.*

If the butter catches fire, twelve villages will be his; if smoke rises, atleast three. If he sacrifices in the morning and evening the fallings off of rice-grains, (oblations of fresh cow-dung in the morning and evening are also recommended) his means of livelihood will not be exhausted, To become a ruler

*Becoming a ruler.*

he should fast through a period of eight nights, then should kindle a fire to the east or north of the village, at a place where four roads meet, (the fuel, sruva and the cup of water being of Udumbara wood) and sacrifice Ājya twice with two appropriate formulas and

*Cattle.*

offer a third oblation in the village with another formula. If a person is desirous of cattle he should sacrifice

*Luck for a Snātaka*

a thousand oblations of the excrement of a male and a female calf. A Snātaka when lying down to sleep should put his bamboo staff near (his bed) with the formula "Strong one ! Protect," This will bring him luck. These prescriptions are from Kh.G,S. The Gobhila G. S. similarly gives many ritual performances for those who are desirous of holy lustre, glory, happiness of sons and cattle and of horses and elephants. If desirous of wealth from a

rich person, he should worship the sun (with the first verse from M.B. II. 4.9.13) within sight of the person rich in wealth. With the two formulas (M.B.II,6,7–8) he should sacrifice two oblations of rice and barley separately with reference to a person, whose favour he wishes to gain. The Āp. III, 9 gives rites whereby the father of the wife may bring about concord between the husband and the wife. There is a rite to be performed by the wife if she wishes to bring her husband or her co-wives under her control. A strange rite of black magic is mentioned for one who wishes to make a companion or a pupil or a servant remain faithfully with him. He bathes in the morning, puts on clean garments, shows patience with that person during the day, speaks only with Brahmins and by night, goes to the dwelling of that person, makes water into the horn of a living animal, walks three times round his dwelling-place, sprinkling his urine round it with a Mantra like "I sever thee from thy friends and relations" and then puts down the horn in a place which is generally accessible. He whose companions, servants or pupils are in the habit of running away, should rebuke them with an appropriate Mantra, then enter his house, put a piece of Sidhraka wood on the fire and offer oblations (H). If he runs away, his master should establish a fire from burning wood and sacrifice in it Kuśa plates (used for the hand when holding a hot sacrificial pan) anointed with ghee. It has been already noted in chapter IV that ritual was believed to ensure victory on the battle-field. Special rites are also prescribed for the destruction of enemies, securing a large family and ensuring long life.

## Section B.

### Expiations and Atonements.

The ritual to be performed by way of an atonement or expiation or to remedy the evil effects of an undesirable event or evil omen embraces various aspects of life. If a person gets angry, his anger was to be appeased by the muttering of appropriate verses praying to the gods "to take away the power of wrath from him". When he has first seen the new moon, he sips water and worships the moon, with a pot of water in his hands. Prayers to Rudra are to be offered if one comes upon a place that is frequented by serpents or one is overtaken by a tornado. The Śvagraha prāyaśchitta or the rite for averting epilepsy which is regarded as the attack of the dog-demon is typical. The boy attacked (it appears boys were generally the victims) is to be taken through an opening in the roof of the house from above, into the gambling-room and laid on dice. Then a mixture of salt water and curds is poured on him while a gong is beaten in the south. The Kh. lays down (for this same rite) that the father should cover him with a net or upper garment, take him on his lap and utter "Chet ! Chet ! Śunaka (Doggy) ! Set him (the boy) free" S. recommends for an attack of diseases in general, the sacrifice of boiled rice-grains with Gavedhuka grass. If disease befalls a person who has set up the Śrauta fires, he should leave his village with the fire in the eastern or northern direction so that the sacred fire fond of the village may soon restore him to health (!); and when thus restored to health, he should offer a soma (or animal-or ordinary) sacrifice. If his cows are sick, he sacrifices milk-

rice in the stable. If there is a place with a biting insect he should besprinkle it with water murmuring appriate verses. If he is doing this for cattle, let him fetch in the afternoon an earth-clod taken out of a furrow and in the morning let him strew the dust of it on the place attacked by worms, murmuring the same texts as above. One who has been bitten by a venomous snake, should be sprinkled with water, some one murmuring the verse "Do not fear" (M.B.11-6-18).

## Section "C".

### Minor Superstitions or beliefs.

The G. S. give us quite a number of minor superstitions which survive even to this day. That one should not stand upon the thresh-hold is a superstition reflected in the bride-groom's instruction to the bride "Do not stand on the threshold" (H) at the marriage ceremony. The murmuring of different incantations is prescribed for the following incidents, which represent various minor superstitions:-*viz.* when he has yawned etc. If the skirt of his garment is blown upon him, he murmurs a verse and tears off a thread (from that skirt) and should blow it away with his mouth. If a bird befouls him with its excrements, he murmurs a verse, wipes off that part with something else in his hand and washes himself with water. If a drop of water falls down upon him unexpectedly, he mutters a verse. Similarly he does when he comes to a cross-road; or a dung-heap; when he plunges into a river which is full of water; when approaching a beautiful place, a sacrificial site or a big tree. If the sun rises while he is sleeping, he shall fast that day and shall stand silent during that day; the same is

to be done during the night, if the sun sets while he sleeps. If a persons touches a sacrificial post, he brings upon himself (the guilt of) whatever faults have been committed at that sacrifice; therefore he utters a verse (H). While setting out on a road and when he meets an inauspicious bird, he similarly murmurs verses. A curious thing is that when a solitary jackal is seen, not only is a verse uttered but the jackal is even worshipped (or propitiated from a distance) with an Anuvāka of the Taitt. S. Similarly are a she-wolf, a bird and owl appeased. If he sees a bad dream, he sacrifices sesamum seeds mixed with Ājya, with some verses. If a dove sits on the hearth or the bees make honey in his house, or a cow that is not a calf sucks another cow or a post puts forth shoots or an ant-hill has arisen in his house (for which S. recommends abandonment of the house for 3 nights with fasting) the expiation is that he bathes in the morning, puts on clean garments, shows patience (with everybody) during the day, speaks only with Brahmins and puts wood on the fire in an inner apartment and then offers a sacrifice with appropriate verses and finally serves food to the Brāhmaṇas and secures their blessings (H). Nirṛiti was a much-dreaded evil spirit that was offered Balis. S. recommends rather too elaborate expiations and sacrificing (such as cooking rice-grains with the milk of a cow that has a calf of the same colour and offering then into the fire) for similar prodigies and evil omens, such as a dove or owl sitting on the house or for the cawing of a crow heard at mid-night or for the breaking of the Ājya pot or Praṇīta water-pot. The superstition regarding the southern direction as the direction of death and generally inauspicious is

very persistent. The eastern and the northern directions were favourites. The inviting of an odd number of Brahmins who have no deficient limbs and the selection of an odd tithi represent other superstitions. Humming in the ears and throbbing of the eye also require oblations ( Kh. ). Miracles and prodigies are regarded as so common that they are enumerated among the expected interruptions of Vedic study. When the student undertakes a journey after taking leave of his teacher ( who repeats some verses at the time of his departure to avert danger ), he mutters appropriate verses when he hears disagreeable voices of birds or throws a fire-brand burning on both sides in the direction of danger or twirls about a churning stick from the right to the left and then turns it downward with appropriate verses. If he is faced with unknown danger from all sides, he sacrifices Ājya oblations. On a dangerous road, let him make knots in the skirts of those who travel together. This will ensure a prosperous journey to himself and his companions.

# Chapter VII.

## Manners & Morals; Habits & Customs.

### PART 1. THE ṚV. PERIOD.

*Morals.*

Ṛitam and Satyam ( Right and Truth ) were highly valued as the main-stays of the moral order. Rv. IV. 5.5 condemns falsehood. The Gods punish untruth ( I.152.1;VI.49.3 ). Adultery and rape were not only condemned as non-āryan along with theft and robbery but were also accounted among the most serious offences. After all, however, the Rv. society was only human and such abberations from morality as human beings are prone to, in all times and countries, are alluded to in the Rv. The following are *therefore references to exceptions which prove the rule* viz. the existence of a high standard of morality generally ( Macd[1] ). Illegitimate births were concealed. There are allusions to conjugal infidelity, procuring of abortion and seduction. But as Winternitz remarks[2], if a few brotherless maidens turned prostitutes, that does not prove the existence of a grand system of courtesans as Pischel and Geldner held.

*Sexual immorality*

*Gambling & debts.*

Debts were often incurred and paid off by instalments and the Gambling hymn X. 34 shows how the enticing lure of dice could ruin a

1. H.S.L. 2. History of Indian Literature p. 67.

man's home life and social position by plunging him into debts. Cheating at gambling was a common crime.

## PART 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

No new details are added to the above picture which continues to represent conditions in this period as well, The story of Satyakāma Jābāla emphasises the value of truth. Gambling continued to be a common addiction as before (in the ṚV period). Technical terms like Kṛita from that game are mentioned.

## PART. 3. ŚRAUTA-SŪTRAS AND PĀṆINI.

As in the later Gṛihya—Sūtras, so in the Śrauta Sūtras we find some brutally frank statements about

*Morals.*

sexual immorality which however must be seen in their proper perspective as referring to exceptions. The Yajamāna before beginning the sacrifice asks his wife to make a clean confession about her paramours in the sacred presence of the fire. Courtesans were invited at the consecration of a sacrificial shed.

*Customs.*

The Brāhmaṇas used Gotra or family names as surnames. according to Pāṇini and the Kshatriyas derived their names from the people they ruled over or some ancestor, A name derived from that of the father was also used:–all which very nearly comes to the modern practice of three names—a proper name, the second, derived from that of the father and a third or surname from the Gotra.

## PART 4, THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION 'A'. Manners.

*Hospitality as a duty*

So keen was the instinct of hospitality among the ancient Āryans that the duty of welcoming a guest was almost a religious duty raised to the status of an 'Atithiyajña' (or the offering of food to a guest) which was one of the five Mahāyajñas, a householder had to perform every-day and a Snātaka was to eat only remnants of food remaining, after the Manes, Gods, guests etc. had received their due share. We get a complete picture of the manner in which guests were received and honoured from practically all the Gṛihya-Sūtras particularly in connection with the reception that the snātaka was to be given before entering his village after finishing his vedic studies. "A guest arriving at the right time burns him up who neglects him" and again "A Brahmin guest who stays unhonoured in the house of a man who daily performs the Agnihotra takes away all his merit". ( Passages of this import are quoted in S.G.S. in connection with hospitality to a guest).

*Definition of 'A guest'. The authorized list of guests*

A teacher, a Ṛitvik (an officiating priest) a father-in-law (son-in-law also ?) a king and a Snātaka are the important categories of guests. Ā. adds the paternal and maternal uncles to the list. Of these the Ṛitvik must get a reception whenever he performs a soma sacrifice, be it more than once in the year; the others can claim the

Arghya reception not more than once a year. A person living in the same village, or one that comes in after a journey is not to be considered as a guest but only one who has arrived at night time (i. e. in the afternoon or evening when the sun's beams pass over the trees) and at a house where the wife is present and the fires of the host are kept.

*Occassions for guest-reception*

A wedding and sacrifice are very important occasions when a cow as a rule is killed in honour of the guest. The H,G.S. gives details in connection with the reception to a Snātaka and it is a model for reception-procedure in general. The host prepares a dwelling-place *i.e.* just a shed or small maṇḍap near his house, for the snātaka to whom he is going to offer Argha reception and says to him when he has arrived: "The Argha will be offered". The guest replies "Do so" (Gobhila:—To the north of the place of Arghya reception, a cow is tied to a post or the like).

*The details of the reception*

*Preparation of the materials or articles of reception*

Then the Madhuparka is prepared. it consists of two substances: curds and honey or if there is no honey, butter and curds or three, ghee being added to the two; or five substances, grains and flour being added those three (Āp.) or water and ground grains (H.G.S.). Curds are poured first into a brass vessel and then honey is poured into it and then the other substances mentioned above. This brass vessel is then covered with another brass vessel larger than that. A seat for the guest is got ready, consisting of a

couch or a bed (i.e. a bundle) of grass or two such seats are kept ready (a high one for sitting upon and another for putting the feet on); water for washing the feet, Argha water and water for sipping is also kept ready. Then going round the single objects which are brought for the guest, the host or another person in a clear voice announces each of them separately to the guest, thrice. The couch, bed or seat made of northward-pointed Darbha grass is announced with the words "The bunch of grass!" The guest then accepts the couch and sits thereon with his face towards the east repeating mantras like "A giver of royal power art thou?" "I am the highest one among my people". "Here I tread on him who infests me". Then, on the second seat (if there are two) he treads with his feet. The host then announces to him the water for washing the feet, and then a Śūdra male or female servant washes his feet. For the washing, the guest extends his left foot first, if the host is a Brahmin; and the right one first if he belongs to the two other castes (or is a Śūdra Āp.). [Ā. puts it in the reverse order;–the right foot should be first extended to a Brahmin host and the left to another]. The two feet are washed separately and then both together with appropriate Mantras. The host then makes to him the announcement "The Argha water!". The guest accepts it in the hollow of his joined hands (Ā) with a formula like "May I obtain all my wishes" etc. and then he recites the formula "To the ocean I send you" etc. over the remainder of the Argha water given back to the host while it is being poured out by him (or while pour-

*The manner of reception*

ing it out himself; P.). He then makes the announcement "The water for sipping!" The guest sips it with the formula "Thou art the first layer for ambrosia". Then comes the announcement "The honey mixture!" The guest looks at the honey mixture with the formula "With Mitra's eye I look at thee" (Ā.S. & P.). He accepts it with the Savitṛi verse with both hands (or with the right hand) or with joined hands (Ā. S.). He then places it on the ground (for mixing or stirring), or he takes it into his left hand for stirring (this would be possible if the quantity is small), and then mixes the different substances in it by stirring it with the fourth finger and thumb of his right hand from left to right and then throws away some part of it with the fourth finger and thumb three times" (P.). Then he partakes of it three times repeating an appropriate formula each time; (silently, a fourth time : Gobhila). The guest then either eats the whole of the Madhuparka or as a rule, leaves a remainder [which is either poured out on unfrequented spot to the east (or in water) or given to a person kindly disposed towards him (*i. e.* a son or pupil or a Brahmin sitting to the north P.] because the guest is not to satiate himself with the Madhuparka. He then rinses his mouth twice with appropriate formulas and then sips water.

When the guest has sipped water, the host announces to him thrice "The cow!" The cow is either killed or let loose. If the guest chooses to have it killed, he kills it either himself or gets it killed by the host with a mantra like "Destroy sin and the sin of the host" (Ā); or if he chooses to let it loose, he murmurs "This cow

will become a milch-cow; the mother of the Rudras is she. To the people who understand me, I say, do not kill the guiltless cow which is Aditi; Let it drink water. Let it eat grass" and gives order to the people "Om! let it loose". (Gobhila implies that the cow is killed on the occasion of a sacrifice and wedding only, in connection with which the Arghya reception is offered *e. g*, to an officiating priest or a son-in-law). If the cow is let loose, a meal is prepared with other meat (because the Arghya cannot be without flesh P. S.) and he announces it to the guest in the words "It is ready". The guest replies "It is well-prepared, it is the Virāj, it is food" and adds "Give food to the Brāhmaṇas". After the Brāhmaṇas have eaten, the host orders good food to be brought to the guest who accepts it with an appropriate formula, eating as much as he likes and gives the remainder to a person kindly disposed towards him.

The code of conduct prescribed for a Snātaka throws much light on contemporary manners. A Snātaka is not to wear a scentless wreath unless it is made of gold nor hold his shoes in his hands. He is not to ridicule a girl who is an Ajātalomnī. He is not to eat food which is brought by another door than the usual one or which is stale (standing over-night) except such as is prepared of vegetable, flesh, barley, flour or milk. He is not to go to a sacrifice without invitation, not to go to assemblies of people and having gone, point out anything evil against anybody. He should not wander from place to place, should not walk alone or naked, should not sit or walk with covered hands, nor run when every-

*Manners in general.*

thing is well, nor spit, nor scratch himself nor look on urine and excrement, not talk too much, nor beg nor go at night to another village alone or with Śūdras or enter it by a bye-path except in an emergency, nor run while it rains nor swim with his arms across a river. Let him sit for answering the calls of nature with veiled head, on ground that is not bare, suspending his sacrificial cord over his ear if he has only one garment, not turning his face or rump to the sun; in the day-time with his face to the north and at night to the south. He is not to climb up a tree, nor gather fruit, nor look down into a well. He shall not go to an execution-place and in no case to a Śmaśāna. The naked condition is to be so scruplously avoided that he is to take his daily bath with his clothes on and put on another garment before he is dry after bath. On sneezing, yawning, seeing a disagreeable sight, smelling a bad smell, when his eye palpitates or there are noises in his ears, verses are to be muttered to keep off evil. A Snātaka is not to put on a wet garment or one garment only; should not praise a person excessively, should not speak of what he has not seen or heard of, as if he had seen or heard of it. The Snātaka is not to crawl through narrow openings, nor jump over plain ground. If it rains he shall not go without an upper garment; nor look at himself in water; shall not laugh at a woman looking like a man nor at a eunuch. A cow sucking her calf is not to be reported to another. He is not to void urine or excrement on a ploughed field or uncovered ground, standing or sitting. He is not spit out in the sun or take warm water for ritual-purposes. He is not to use harsh language; so great is the insistence on purity of language in ordinary talk or conversation that a

*Purity of Utterance.*

Snātaka is not to wear a garland if *it is called a Mālā* but is to wear it only when it is called a "Srag" ! He is to avoid pronouncing certain words as they are *e. g.* he should refer to a "Garbhiṇī" as a " Vijanyā "; a " Nakula " as a " Sakula "; " Kapāla, as "Bhagāla"; "Indra-dhanus', as "Mani-dhanus" and should not use the words "Bhadra" without a reason and if he has to use it at all, he should say " Mandra " instead of " Bhadra ".

SECTION 'B'. Morals or the ethical code.

*Brahma-charya,*

A Snātaka is not to look at a naked woman except during sexual intercourse with his wife or talk with a woman who has been confined to child-bed or during her courses. He is not to eat together with his wife and he is to have intercourse with his wife only at the proper time, The preparation of seats in the 'Ustarga' ceremony (Conclusion of the Vedic term) for "those who have one wife only and who observe Brahmacharya" shows that *self-restraint in conjugal intercourse* was respected. For three nights or for a longer period after marriage, the married couple were to avoid saline food, sleep on the ground, refrain from decoration and remain chaste. This shows that marriage was not the beginning of a period of unbridled sexual indulgence. The three nights of the menstrual period were to be passed in a chaste manner. Ā. G. S. tells us that if one year of celibacy was observed by the couple after marriage, a Ṛishi would be born as a result of the consummation. If he approaches his wife when he ought not to he is to

perform prāyaśchitta. A Snātaka is not to ridicule a girl who though grown up does not show signs of maturity or is the only chiid of her mother or a woman in menses. He is not to look at a naked woman (even is she be his wife). The down-right candour with which the G. S. tackle some of the conjugal or social sins is a remarkable feature *e. g.* in H. G. S. 11,107, (in the śrāddha description) we read 'If my mother (or grand-mother etc.) has gone astray unmindful of her duty towards her husband, may my father ( or grand-father etc. ) accept that sperm as his own". Thus instances of conjugal infidelity ( the exceptions proving the rule ) are not over-looked. A Rite is prescribed for Dārāgupti or the guarding of the wife's chastity. (For details see the chapter on Magic in Ritual). In the Garbhādhāna rite, one of the mantras to be recited while embracing the wife is like this in Ā 1. 245":—"Whatever there is in your body death-bringing to thy husband, that I make death-bring to thy paramour" etc. (In Pāraskara G. S.) a snātaka is warned against wishing for sport with the wife of a Śrotriya who knows the mantra destroying the wife's lover. This is a very brutally frank statement indeed! Similarly S. III, 13. 5 prescribes a special mantra for the sacrificer (if he is an illegitimate child) atoning for the sin of his mother in the middle-Ashṭakā rite.

*Conjugal infidelity*

As if this were not enough to show that human nature is fundamentally the same in all times, there is

*Faithless companions. Angry superiors.*

other evidence. A rite is prescribed (for details see the chapter on Superstitions) for keeping companions, pupils or servants faithful as well as for appeasing the anger of a superior, which shows that faithless companions and angry superiors are met with in every age and further shows that the faithfulness of companions, friends and servants was very much appreciated.

*Mental purity.*

But the purity insisted upon in the case of a Snātaka is not merely physical purity but mental purity as well. A Snātaka is not even to look at an enemy, an evil-doer or a corpse-carrier. He is to observe his vows, befriend and protect everyone. The great importance attached to truth-speaking is seen from the rule in P. that truth-speaking alone may suffice for all the observances that the Snātaka has to keep for the three nights after the Samāvartana. Modesty and humility are in modern times perhaps not exactly regarded as virtues but they were insisted upon in the case of a Snātaka.

*Respect for elders.*

Everyday he is to salute respectfully his teacher, his Gurus (elders) a śrotriya and any body older than himself whom he meets when he is back home after a journey. The manner of these greetings is as follows :–He is to pronounce his own name saying "I am so and so (Amukaśarmā, Amukagotrotpannoham)" crossing his hands, so as to seize with his right hand the right foot and with his left hand, the left foot of the person to be saluted. The person thus greeted addresses him by his name and

seizing his hands, pronounces a good wish to him. The Snātaka is to beware of doing wrong and should not revile or slander anybody. If he has eaten forbidden food or has accepted what ought not to be accepted, sacred verses were to be muttered or two pieces of wood were to be sacrificed by way of expiation. To feel fatigued without doing any work or after doing work that is not becoming was a crime that brought on a Prāyaśchitta. Vedic study is to be suspended in the presence of a corpse-bearer, a woman confined or in menses. He is not to desert his teacher but to remain faithful to him always. Such is the high standard of ethical conduct prescribed in these sūtras.

*Abstinence & self-respect.*

*No delicacy.*

## SECTION 'C': HABITS

If cleanliness is next to godliness the ancient Āryans of the period excelled in this divine virtue. Cleanliness through Āchamana or sipping of water and washing of hands etc. is everywhere insisted upon (and symbolised also as it were in the Gṛihya-ritual in the use of Pavitras *i. e.* strainers or purifiers made of Darbha-grass). The fact that Mantras were to be muttered by way of expiation when an unknown drop of water fell on the body of a Snātaka, when a skirt was blown on his body, if a bird befouled him or if an unknown fruit fell on his person or if he crossed a filthy place, is evidence of the same virtue. Rules for mental purity or purity of sight and speech are simply reflections of the same tendency.

*Cleanliness*

Eating in the dark at night was prohibited for a Snātaka lest he should eat defiled food.

*Gambling.*

The reference to the besprinkling of the central place in a hall where they gamble and the casting of dice, scattering them on all sides, making a heap of them and spreading them out as part of the magical rite or expiation for curing a boy attacked by epilepsy or the dog-demon shows that the gambling habit was pretty common.

*Early rising.*

That the habit of early rising was valued is seen from the prohibition for a Snātaka against rising after sunrise and sleeping before sunset; so the "Early to bed" part of the well known maxim was not to be carried too far ! Again sleeping during the first or last watch of the night was prohibited. This shows that excess of sleep was condemned.

## SECTION 'D' : CUSTOMS

As has been remarked above, so complete is the process of ritualising every act of life, that customs can hardly be demarcated from the sacraments marking the different stages of life. Hence the reader is requested to

*Customs.*

turn to the chapter on "Magic in the ritual" for many interesting customs in connection with the life of a child before (i. e. in the womb) and after birth. We shall mention here, only *such customs as are comparatively free from ritual context.* The counting of years not from birth but from conception is an interesting custom having a parallel in the Buddhist ordinances. Pāraskara similarly

recognises varying family customs in the option given for the year of the Keśānta ceremony. In other contexts also, the Gṛihya-sūtras recognize the force of custom as regulating the exact details of the marriage and other sacraments. One custom not mentioned in the sixth chapter is:–The father's greeting to the son described in the texts generally, immediately after the Nāmakaraṇam. It takes place either when the father returns from a journey or when the son returns from a journey (H) or when the child has grown up to know "This is my father" (or when the son has been initiated). The father approaches the house and enters it with appropriate formulæ and on seeing the son murmurs "Aṅgādaṅgāt sambhavasi" and "sa jīva śaradaḥ śatam" then touches him with a formula and then kisses his head with the words "With the hiṁkara of Prajāpati, I kiss thee" and three times with the words "With the hiṁkāra of the cows". This kissing is done by the father grasping with his two hands, his son round the head. Then seizing with his right hand the right hand of the boy together with the thumb, he murmurs a mantra in his right ear and another in his left ear. The same is done to his other younger sons according to the order of their age or the order in which he meets them (G). As for girls, they are silently kissed on the head.

# Chapter VIII.

## Amusements and Entertainments.

### PART. 1. RV. PERIOD.

Music both vocal and instrumental was known. The singing (or rather the musical recitation) of the soma-pressing Brahmins is referred to in the 'Frog-hymn' (VII. 103,7-8). Different vocal sounds are also carefully analysed there. Singing in general is often mentioned in the Rv. Different types of musical instruments such as the Viṇā (lute or string-instrument the Dundubhi (drum) and the Vāṇa (flute or wind-instrument) and the dancing of maidens are alluded to. Macdonell[1] points out that men also took part in dancing which took place in the open air as may be gathered from the line X,76,6 "Thick dust arose as from men who dance. (Nṛityatām)". The dialogue—hymns of the RV. have been the source of many theories regarding the earliest form of the drama. These are relics of vedic mysteries, an inheritance from Indo-European times according to (Von Schroeder) and Dr. Keith[2] thinks it probable that dramatic spectacles, religious in character were known to the RV. Period. The chariot-race was a favourite form of amusement and gave rise to many similes and metaphors. The fascination exercised by gambling has already been noted.

*Music (a) Vocal.*

(b). *Instrumental*

(c). *Dancing.*

*Drama.*

*Chariot-race.*
*Gambling.*
*Hunting.*

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1. H.L.S. p. 169. 2. The Sanskrit Drama, p. 16.

Hunting was pretty common and must have been indulged in as, an amusement by the Rājanya class.

## PART 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀMAṆAS.

Music or Saṅgīta of all the three types "(Nṛityam Gītam cha Vāditram)" as well as chariot-races and gambling continued to be the principal amusements in this period. By the time of the Yajurveda, several kinds of professional musicians appear to have arisen for, lute-players, drummers, flute—players and conch—blowers are enumarated in its list of callings[1]. The Sāma-veda is a standing monument to the development of vocal music in this period. "Some people haunted the gaming-hall to such an extent that we find them jocularly described in the Yajurveda as pillars of the play-house (Sabha-sthāṇu)"[2] a title which has a modern parallel in the term "Cinema-fans". The Śailūsha or actor, figures among the victims of the Purusha-medha in the Yajur-veda. The Maitrāyaṇī Up. refers to a naṭa changing his dress and painting himself. There is a theory that a precursor of the later classical drama existed in this period. Pāṇini refers to Naṭasūtras which leaves no doubt that in his days atleast dramas were being acted.

*Regular plays.*

## PART 3. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

Though ritual seems to dominate life, there is abundant evidence of the light side of human nature asserting itself, in the Gṛihya-sūtra days. Music in all its three varieties : dancing, vocal music and instrumental music was widely cultivated. Thus the wife is asked to sing merrily in the Sīmantonnayana ceremony (S. I. 22. 16)

*Vocal music.*

1. Macdonell H.S.L. p. 170 2. Ibid P. 168.

wearing many ornaments if she likes. P. tells us that the bride-groom sings a song (Gātha) after making the bride tread on a stone and before the sacrifice of fried grains.

The vogue of the Sāma-veda recitations itself shows as noted above that people had a well-cultivated musical ear from the earliest times. The Vāmadevya Gāna which should be sung by way of expiation at the end of every rite, according to the Gobhila G. S. belongs to the Sāma-veda.

*Instrumental music.*

In, S, I. 22. II. and Ā. 1. 14. 6 we meet with the description in the Sīmantonnayana ceremony that the husband asks the lute-players to play the lute with words like "Sing ye to the king Soma". We saw above that (S. I.11,5) in the marriage ceremony, four or eight women who are not widows are given surā and asked to perform a dance four times; so dancing was a common accomplishment. The very restrictive rule that a Snātaka is not himself to practice (or enjoy a programme of) dancing, singing or instrumental music (an exception being permissible in the case of singing only), shows the popularity of the three-fold saṅgīta.

*Dancing.*

Gambling has been mentioned as a prevalent addiction elsewhere but it was a common *entertainment* also of the people. In the chapter on house-building (Ā) we are told that if the assembly-hall is inclined to the south, there will be no gambling but that according to another view young people there will gamble and quarrel; so gambling with its inevitable after—math of quarreling was a recognised evil.

# Chapter IX.

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## Food & Drink.

### PART 1. RV. PERIOD.

The chief ingredient of food was milk and its various products, chiefly ghee or clarified butter. Fruit and vegetables were also used. Among grains Yava was used.

*Vegetarian food*
(a) *Milk etc.*

It is not certain whether 'Yava' means "Barley" as in later literature. Rice is not mentioned in the RV. The grains were parched or ground into flour with a mill-stone, then mixed with milk or butter and finally made into cakes.

(b). *Food-preparation.*

The milk was drunk by itself, warm as it came from the cow or used for cooking grains.

Meat was eaten, the flesh of the ox, the sheep and the goat being commonly used. It was roasted on spits or cooked in earthen or metal pots.

*Flesh-food.*

The killing of animals for their flesh was assigned (and therefore also effectively restricted) to the sacrifice and the ritual. Horse-flesh for example must have been rarely eaten, as horse-sacrifices were not frequent. The flesh of the Mahisha or buffalow was used. The cow is called " Aghnyā " (not to be killed) in the RV., but is a common sacrificial victim ! Reverence for the cow as a gentle and useful creature is there and is steadily growing.

Salt is not mentioned in the ṚV. but (according to Macdonell) must have been used as the salt—range between the Indus and Jhelum abounds in it.

Milk as noted above was a favourite drink. The Soma juice, though it appears almost exclusively in the ṚV as a sacrificial drink, must *once have been* a popular inebriating drink. It was mixed with milk. "Surā" is another intoxicating drink, the use of which is described in the ṚV to be as sinful as 'dice or anger' ("Campare "Surā manyur bibhīdakochittiḥ" in a hymn to Varuṇa) The avestan equivalent "Hura" for "Surā" shows it to be nearly as old as the soma. Surā was distilled from grain and must have come to be more frequently used when the Soma at some unknown stage of Āryan advance became difficult to procure and substitutes had to be found out. Drinking vessels seem to be made of wood.

## PART 2;—THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS

Quite a large variety of grains is known in this period. The Upanishads (and the Taittirīya-Saṁhitā also) mention rice (Vrīhi) and a variety of it the jungle-rice (Priyaṅgu) as well as yava (which means barley now definitely), sesamum ( Tila ), wheat (godhūma), beans (māsha) etc. Rice is getting more and more often used. Rice and barley mixed with curds were often eaten. Oil was extracted from "Tila". Meat continued to be eaten though a feeling of revulsion against it, was gradually developing. Abstinence from it is looked upon as meritorious and recommended in a vrata or Vow (Tāṇḍya

*Vegetarian food*

*Meat.*

Br.). The Sānkhāyana Br. XI. 13 says that "If people eat Paśus (animals) in this word, the paśus will eat them in the other world" ! Its use was confined to the sacrifice but could not be rare on that account as sacrifices were frequent and so far dominated the entire life of the Āryans in this period that the Upanishads raised their voice of protest against this excess of ritual. Meat-eating and drinking of surā are both put in the category of sins in the Upanishads because indulgence in both was carried on, it seems under cover of the sacrifice. Cows' flesh was eaten at certain higher sacrifices.

The Sautrāmaṇī sacrifice (an expiation for over-indulgence in wine-drinking) shows that the Kshatriyas drank surā freely and the Brāhmaṇas only at the sacrifices. The Ait. Br. praises surā (!) and the Vājasaneyi Saṁh. mentions a 'surā-kāra' or a distiller of wine. The Chhandogya Up. VI, 10, however ranks liquor-drinking a mahā-pātaka or Major Sin. *Towards the end of this period then,* the Upanishads may be said to have raised their first protest against some of the undesirable tendencies of the time such as over-indulgence in wine and flesh-eating.

*Drinks.*

## PART 3. GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION 'A' : Food—grains etc.

Among the different kinds of grains and seeds known, are rice, barley (Yava) mustard-seed (Sarshapa) and beans (Māsha). Vrihi (Rice) and Yava (Barley) seem to be the staple grains because they are sacrificed every

1. History of Sanskrit Literature.

morning and evening as oblations (H). 'Mudga'beans are mentioned as sacrificed with boiled rice at the Sīmanto-nnayana ceremony. In the Chūḍākarma ceremony, vessels filled with sesamum seeds, barley, rice and beans are mentioned. That rice and barley were staple grains is clear also from the rule in G. I. 4,29 that the house-holders should offer 'Āsasya'bali consisting of barley from the barley-harvest (in the hot season) till the rice-harvest (in autumn) and that consisting of rice, from the rice-harvest to the barley-harvest.

SECTION 'B' : Milk and its products.

Milk, its products and the different stages of its transformation are mentioned and minutely distinguished from each other such as for example, melted butter, clarified butter and solidified ghee and the technical terms for these are Ājya, sarpis and ghṛita respectively-the first two terms being generally employed in a retual context only. The Pṛishātaka is a special (ritual) mixture mentioned by Ā. in the Āśvayujī-karma where a mixture of curds and pṛishātaka is offered into the fire. The commentator explains it as "Payasyājye Nishikte to tatpayaḥ syāt pṛishātakam" a mixture of milk and melted butter or Ājya. Ājya (technically ghee or rather butter in an invariably liquid form) is mentioned repeatedly in the ritual. In fact there was a special Ājya-pot which alone was used in pouring it into the fire. The address to "Ājya" while taking up the Ājya-pot (S. I. 8. 18) "milk of the cows art thou". raises a very interesting question as to *when* buffalo-milk came into use (!) Curds seem to be popular and are often mentioned. They are taken by

the married couple along with boiled rice, (S). The bee-stings of a cow that has just delivered are mentioned also.

SECTION 'C': Other Articles of food.

Honey is often mentioned. In the Annaprāśana ceremony, curds, honey and ghee are given first to the child. 'Madhu' in the expression ("Madhu-māṁsa-bhakshana" which is forbidden to a Brahmachārin,) very probably means wine and not honey though the latter meaning is not altogether improbable. "Kshāra-lavaṇa" or saline food seems to have been regarded as an excitant as it is to be avoided in the interests of celibacy and purity. There was some special holy food which could be eaten on fast-days, as 'fast-day food' is referred to in the description of the Darśa-paurṇa-māsa sacrifice in Kh. As Ājya was a bit costly and was not always available to the poor, technical substitutes are mentioned such as taila (oil made of sesamum-seeds), curds, milk, rice-gruel or sarpis, which are severally designated as 'Ājya', for ritual purposes.

SECTION 'D': The culinary art.

*The Different culinary operations.*

The culinary art was practically in *as developed* a condition and the cooking process as *elaborate* as now and the grains of the fields were subjected to different operations indicated in words like "Akshata-dhānā's (Unbroken grains), Lājās (fried-grains) and Saktus (ground grains). Washing the rice-grains by sprinkling water over them, husking them, baking them and sprinkling Ājya over them and then taking them out of the fire are mentioned as stages in the preparation of

a 'Sthālīpāka'. The preparation of the Puroḍāśa implies a great development of the art of baking. An apūpa is a cake baked on a flat vessel and a pan with a varying number of hollows resembling dishes, gave a variety of forms to the Puroḍāśa, offering. In one place (Ā) we get an idea of the size and substance of the Apūpa cake which is made of 4 śarāvas (vessels or cups) of ground grains. Along with this measure-cup (śarāva), is mentioned the Darvī which was a spoon. The Sthālī was a cooking utensil so commonly used that it gives its name to the standard type or norm of a cooked-sacrifice : the 'Sthālīpāka'. The sruva is another spoon used in the Gṛihya-ritual. The sruk is another implement-a wooden ladle. A grind-stone and mortar are regarded as so important that they are offered Balis in the Vaiśvadeva ceremony; copper, iron, earth-ware and stone vessels were known (Ā. IV. 3. 19). A Snātaka was not to drink from an earthen vessel for 3 nights after the Snāna.

*Cooked things.*

Among the cooked thing were the Apūpa, Sthālīpāka and Puroḍāśa, as mentioned above; Odana (or boiled rice) was eaten sometimes with ghee (which when given to the child in the Annaprāśana ceremony endowed it with splendour). At the ceremony ef Vṛishotsarga (release of the bull) (S), Brāhmaṇas were fed with milk-rice (which comes up very near to the 'Dudha-pāka' dish popular in Gujarat). It is in the description of the Anvashṭakya ceremony (in Ā.) that we find a variety of ancient dainties and dishes such as Kṛisara (or boiled-rice with sesamum seeds), Pāyasa (milk-rice), Dadhimantha or cooked ground grains with curds and madhu-

mantha (or saktus with honey). The scum of boiled rice was known as a very very light liquid food. In the fourth Ashṭakā, flesh was not necessary and Śāka or vegetable food might be offered. In the description of the Śākvara vow, there is a reference to dark or black food? A Snataka is not to eat food which is brought by a back door, nor that has been cooked twice nor that has stood overnight except such as is prepared of vegetables, flesh, barley or of floor. Yavāgū or rice-gruel is another preparation of rice that is mentioned.

SECTION 'E': Flesh-eating.

So much about vegetarian food; but the ancients were not strict vegetarians in any sense of the term and ate flesh freely not excluding beef. In fact the Ahiṁsā doctrine had yet to make its influence felt in the direction of vegetarianism and the only question that is legitimate is, when this flesh-eating was stopped and not when it started; so common it appears to be at this time! The cow was revered no doubt but the deification of the cow (associated with the development of the of cult of Krishṇa with his cow-herd companions which later led to the prohibition of beef though other flesh was allowed), had yet to come. Cows and bulls were sacrificed, as will be seen in the description of animal-sacrifices in the chapter on Agriculture and cattle. Thus in the Ashṭakā ceremony (refer to the chapter on funeral rites) the parts of the cow killed, other than the omentum are given to the Brāhmaṇas. The general rule in a Śrāddha is that flesh is compulsory. Only in its absence, is vegetable food allowed "श्राद्धे मांसं नित्यं, मांसाभावे शाकम्." The prohibition of the eating of flesh and honey

for a student shows that flesh-eating was common but that at the same time, some of the good effects of abstinence from it were recognised. But the most interesting prescriptions of flesh-food are met with, in connection with the Annaprāśana ceremony (the first feeding of the child with solid food, generally taking place in the sixth month ). According to S., if the first solid food that is given to the child is goat's flesh it conduces to nourishment; partridge-flesh gives holy lustre; fish, swiftness; and boiled rice with ghee endows splendour, P. says that the flesh of the Bhāradvāja bird makes for fluency of speech; that of the partridge gives nourishment, that of the Kṛikasha gives long life and that of the bird Ati gives holy lustre. Similarly the Argha is not to be without flesh. A cow or a goat whose flesh was to be eaten must be kept ready for the guest. *There is evidence however in some Gṛihya-sūtras that a revulson of feeling in this respect was gradually taking place.* Perhaps a cow was killed only on the occasion of a sacrifice, a wedding or a Madhuparka; and beef was not eaten on all days. Again flesh was not indiscrimately eaten, *e. g.* bird's flesh was prohibited for the observer of the Jyeshṭha-sāma-vrata etc.

## SECTION 'F' : Drink.

Different kinds of holy waters were used in the ritual. The 'Praṇita' waters have been referred to in the chapter on Religion. The 'Dhruva' or 'firm' waters ("ध्रुवा आप:") are "waters from rivers and reservoirs, having smell, colour and taste" according to the Gṛihya-saṁgraha-pariśishṭa. There is no doubt that some kind

of exhilarating drink corresponding to wine was in use. S. (I. II. 5) says that in the marriage ceremony four or eight women who are not widows are feasted with vegetables and other food and *surā* and then they perform a dance four times. Similarly G. tells us that the bride is besprinkled on her head with surā of the first quality (*i. e.* prepared from molasses). Curiously enough in the Anvashṭakya rite (Ā. II, 5. 5.) we are told that the performer after offering lumps or Piṇḍas of some substances, such as boiled rice-milk etc. to the fathers, should offer to their wives the same substances with the addition of boiled rice. P. (III. 3-11) also lays down that he makes Piṇḍa offerings to the female ancestors and pours for them strong liquor and water-oblations into pits etc. Now nothing that is not eaten or drunk by the Fathers would be offered to them and the fact is there that surā seems to have been a well-known intoxicating drink. As soma sacrifices formed part of the Śrauta ritual, it is but natural that the Gṛiyha-sūtras should almost ignore the soma-drink. It is nevertheless, to be noted that in course of time, the soma-plant became less and less easily accessible and substitutes came to be used very early. The complete disappearance of the soma plant at a later stage is a baffling mystery; for the solution of which many theories are advanced such as Āryan migration and geological transformation ! The mystery, however, only deepens !

# Chapter X

## Agriculture & cattle

### PART. I. THE ṚV. PERIOD.

Next to cattle-breeding which was the chief source of income, agriculture was an occupation of gradually increasing importance to the ṚV. Āryans, The operation of tilling the soil meant (as now) making furrows in the field with the metallic share of a plough drawn by bullocks. The showing of seeds in these furrows, the cutting of corn or yava when ripe with the sickle, the laying of the bundles of corn on the threshing-floor, the threshing and finally the sifting by winnowing are among the agricultural operations known.

*Agriculture.*

Irrigation is known also. Water-courses, natural and artificial, are referred to in III,45,3 and VII,49,2 and must have been a great help to agriculture.

*Irrigation*

Cows and bullocks were the most precious possession. They constituted the chief form of wealth. The old word, in fact for 'war' or 'battle' is gavishṭi ('desire for cattle') [1]. Macdonell[2] thinks that the name of the sacrificial fee 'Dakshiṇā' is properly an adjective meaning 'right' or 'valuable' with the ellipsis of 'go' a cow. The cows were out at pastures during the day and were kept in stalls during the night. The cow returning

*Cattle.*

1. Winternitz H. I. L, 2. H. S. L.

from the pasture land in the evening and licking her calf fastened by a rope was one of the most gladdening sights and the lowing of the milch-kine, the most musical sound to the ṚV. People. That the raw cow gave warm or cooked milk was a standing wonder. Bulls and oxen were sacrificed in large numbers *but the cow on solemn occasions and sacrifices only* ( vide the last chapter ).

## PART. 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS

Agriculture has developed in this period. Twentyfour oxen were sometimes harnessed to one plough which must have been large and heavy. The Taitti. Saṁhitā tells us that barley sown in winter ripened in summer; rice sown in the rains ripened in autumn and that beans and sesamum planted at the time of the summer-rains ripened in winter. Wheat was known and rice was an important grain. Manure is also referred to. Cultivation suffered from the usual pests-the moles (that destroyed the seed) and the birds and the other creatures (that harmed the tender shoots). The spells in the Atharva-veda to avert drought and excess of rains show that these inevitable calamities threatened agriculture although irrigation (which was known), sought to minimise their evil effects. There are numerous prayers in the A. V. for prosperity in agriculture and cattle.

*Agriculture.*

The reverence for the cow is indicated by a long hymn to the cow in the A. V. The Ait. Br. shows that

pasture-lands were carefully looked after and large sheds or stalls were erected for the accommodation of cattle. The White Yaj. in prescribing in one place the death penalty[1] for cowkilling (out-side the sacrifice of course) expresses the growing reverence for the cow.

*Cattle.*

## PART. 3. ŚRAUTA-SŪTRAS AND PĀṆIṆI

The Dārshadvata sacrifice was nothing else but the tending of the cows of a Brahmin in Kurukshetra for one year. They still served as a medium of exchange. Thousands of them were given away as dakshiṇā by kings that kept their own herds. Sacrifices were prescribed for recovering lost cows and acquiring them. Cattle-keeping was done by all the three higher castes.

*The importance of the cow.*

A cultivated field was measured by the quantity of seeds required for it and was thus called a Prāsthika, or requiring a Prastha of seeds.

## PART 4. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION 'A' : Agriculture.

Agriculture was the staple occupation of the people, the very term "Krishṭīnām" ('of human tribes that draw the plough') used for people in general implying that. But there is ample direct evidence in the Ritual showing the importance of agriculture in the life of the people. The G. Sūtras tell us *when* the plough-

*Setting the plough in motion*

1. Macdonell H. S. L.

ing was to be done. Thus according to S.G.S. it should be done under the Nakshatra Rohiṇī (or under the Nakshtras, Uttarā Proshṭhapadās or Uttarā Phalgunīs according to Ā) or under the Nakshatra Jyesṭha because that rite is sacred to Indra who is Jyesṭha or the highest among the gods according to P. A Bali (according to the S.G.S.) is offered at the eastern boundary of his field to 'Heaven and Earth' with a verse sacred to both. With the Ṛigveda hymn (IV,5,7), "Through the lord of the field" verse by verse worship is offered to the different directions (with oblations or prayers according to Ā.) in a place so situated that the wind may blow to him from the field. Pāraskara lays down that on this occasion, he offers curds, rice-grains, perfumes and fried grains to Indra, Parjanya, the two Aśvins, the Maruts, Uddālakāśyapa, Svātikari, Sīta and Anumati and then feeds the bullocks with honey and ghee. Then the bullocks should be put to the plough with the verse Vāj. Saṁh. XII, 67 and then let him touch or let a Brahman touch the plough-share when the plough is being put into motion *for the first time* with the verse (Vāj. Saṁh. XII, 69) [or this last verse may be uttered in connection with the act of sowing because in the Śrauta ritual at the Agni-chayana ceremony, furrows are drawn with the plough on the Agni-Kshetra with the verses : Vāj. Saṁh. XII, 69-72 and after-wards gains of different kinds are sown]. Then the front-bullock is sprinkled with water and unploughed land should then be ploughed. Then while sowing both rice and barley, oblations of cooked sacrificial food should be made to the deities mentioned above and then the feeding of the Brāhmaṇas winds up the ritual.

The goddess 'Sītā' is the rustic deity of the furrows as the very name Sītā (field-furrow) indicates. The sacrifice to Sītā may be offered any where but preferably on a field of rice or barley. Now the mess (or Havis) of cooked food may be prepared either of rice or barley but preferably of rice, if the sacrifice is offered on a field of rice, and of barley, if on a field of barley. The spot of the sacrifice should be a clean one either to the east or the north of the field, ploughed so that the crop be not damaged or it may be offered in the village in a quiet spot where there are no hindrances and where both rice and barley may be mixed. The fire is established on a place that has been smeared with cowdung, which is elevated and which has been sprinkled with water. Then Darbhạ grass mixed with stalks of that variety of corn of which the sacrifice is offered, is strewn round the fire and then the two Ājya portions and oblations are sacrificed with Mantras invoking Indra for rain and prosperity. One Mantra (P. II,17,9) invoking Sītā is interesting:—"Indra's wife, Sītā, I invoke ! Sītā in whom is centred the prosperity of all vedic and worldly works, she who supports living beings; I invoke Urvarā (i.e. the field) dotted with threshing—floors ! etc." Then oblations of the cooked sacrificial food are offered to Sītā, Yaja (the goddess of sacrifice), Śamā (the goddess of devotion) and Bhūti, to the accompaniment of the word Svāhā only. Then Balis are offered on the Kuśa grass, left over from that which was strewn round the fire, to the protecting demons of the furrows presiding over the east, the south, the west and the north, separately and

*Sacrifice to Sītā.*

in order. The Balis that are thus distributed are made of another kind of food such as curds, rice, grains etc. The women offer parallel oblations simultaneously. A dinner to the Brāhmaṇas finishes the ceremony as usual.

The rites of harnessing the bulls to the plough as well as the Sītāyajña are described in Pāraskāra just before the Śrāvaṇa ceremony and after the Aśvayuja-sacrifice respectively and that roughly indicates the time for these rites and the corresponding agricultural operations. Winterntz (H. I. L. P. 515) says "The idea of a goddess of agriculture Sītā who is already invoked in a blessing on the land in ṚV. IV. 57.6 is extremely ancient and reaches far back into the Vedic period. The Gṛihya–sūtras have preserved for us prayer-formulae, personifying her in an extremely life-like manner "Lotus-crowned radiant in every limb, black-eyed", (Kauśika Sūtra 106) and soon. Yet Weber is probably right when he remarks that this Vedic idea of Sītā as the goddess Field-furrow is 'separated *by a wide gulf* from the representation of her in the Rāma-legend'. Neither is there anything to indicate that songs of Rāma and Sītā already existed in Vedic times". Jacobi as pointed out by the same scholar is inclined to find in the Rāma-Rāvaṇa legend another form of the ancient myth of the Indra-Vṛitra battle (cf. a mantra quoted above adressing Sītā as Indra's wife); but the gulf between the Vedic and the Epic versions still remains.

The G. S. describe an Āgrayaṇa sacrifice (the ceremony of partaking of the first fruits of the harvest) in the domestic fire corresponding to the Āgrayaṇeshṭi of

*Agrayaṇa or partaking of the first fruits.*

the Śrauta ritual, the deities of which are Indra and Agni, the Viśvedevas, heaven and earth etc. Thus according to P. a fresh Sthālīpāka, is prepared from the fresh grains of the new harvest and then the two Ājya portions and two Ājya oblations with appropriate formulas follow. Then oblations of the freshly cooked food are offered to the Āgrayaṇa deities, mentioned above and then to Agni Svishṭakṛit with the word 'Svāhā' at the end. Then the fresh fruits are eaten with "May Agni eat first" etc. Only barley is eaten with a different Mantra. The Āp. G. S. describes the eating as follows:–he fills his mouth with grains, swallows them, sips water, forms a lump of boiled sacrificial food, and throws it up with a formula to the top of the house. Gobhila has a slightly different procedure:–A mess of boiled rice-grains with milk, sacred to Indra and Agni is prepared. Then a Havis-offering of that milk-rice is offered first and then over that oblation, Ājya-oblations are sacrificed. The rest should be performed according to the Sthālīpāka rite. The rest of the remnants of sacrificial food should be given to all twiceborn persons present. Having "Spread under" water once, he should cut off two ( three are cut by the Bhṛigus ) portions of the boiled rice-grains and over these portions water is poured. When the food has been prepared in this way, it should be swallowed without chewing three times with a Mantra and silently a fourth time. When cutting off, if a greater portion is cut, it may be chewed. Then water is sipped by all those present and they touch their mouths, heads and the limbs from above downwards with a verse. This

is also the way in which the sacrifice of the first fruits of Śyāmāka and barley grains are offered; only the Mantras accompanying the partaking of the fresh food are different.

Other stages in agricultural life and operations of cultivation such as threshing, sowing, reaping of the crop, and putting it into the barn are indicated by Gob. IV, 4, 30, where he says "The same deities (*i. e.* Indra, Sītā, Maruts etc.) receive offerings at the furrow-sacrifice, at the threshing-floor sacrifice, and sacrifices at the sowing, at the reaping of the crop and at the putting of the crops into the barn. Other sacrifices connected with rural festivities are mentioned by G. in the following Sūtras. "The king of moles is sacrificed to, at mole-hills and a Sthālīpāka to Indrāṇī is offered according to the Sthālīpāka ritual". Perhaps 'Indrāṇī' also is an agricultural deity.

Rice and barley seem to be (as noted in a previous chapter) the staple crops from the direction to the householder to offer a Bali of barley from the barley-harvest to the rice-harvest and of rice from the rice-harvest to the barley harvest.

That there were large stretches of uncultivated lands or forest and that wild rice or grains used to grow in abundant quantities on such untilled tracts is clear from the mode of livelihood prescribed for a snātaka *viz.* "by eating the gleanings of uncultivated corn" etc.

### SECTION 'B': Cattle.

That cattle should be an invaluable possession to an

agricultural country like India from the most ancient times, is hardly surprising. "Make us rich in cows" is almost the burden of the Mantra-songs addressed to the various gods that accompany the Gṛihya-ritual. Cows and bulls are constantly mentioned as presents on different ritual occasions. But cows are not merely valuable as property; a feeling akin to reverence for them is gradually growing. A most significant (though to us strange) fact is that this veneration for the cow is in the eyes of the ancients not inconsistent with but is rather at the bottom of the cow-sacrificing prescribed compulsorily on different occasions in the Gṛihya-sūtras *e. g.* the Ashṭakā, and Anvashṭakya ceremonies (for which the reader is referred to the chapter on Funeral rites and to the descriptions of animal sacrifice in the chapter on religion), the wedding, the Śūlagava sacrifice ( of which a description follows ) and optionally on other occasions, such as the reception (Argha) to a Snātaka and in honour of a deceased relation on the 11th day. We proceed now to describe the Śūlagava sacrifice which concerns cattle.

*Veneration for the cow aud cow-sacrifice side by side.*

*The Śūlagava sacrifice.*

The Śūlagava or spit-ox sacrifice, so called because it is offered to Rudra-the spit-bearer, is sacred to Rudra and is meant to procure to the sacrificer cattle, sons, wealth, fame, long life and heavenly bliss (P). It is meant to propitiate Rudra and avert plague among cattle according to (H). The time for it is the bright fortnight and an auspicious Nakshatra (H), in autumn or in spring under the Ārdrā Nakshatra (Ā). One important fact is that some G. S. give a description of the Śūlagava

which has nothing to do with the killing of a victim as *e. g.* H. Ā. and P. So we sake up the description in H. G. S. first. Under an auspicious Nakshatra two huts are built to the west of the spot where the fire is kindled; wood is then put on the fire, and Darbha is strewn on the entire surface around the fire; then a mess of sacrificial food with milk is cooked, sprinkled with Ājya and taken out from the fire. Then the 'spit-ox' or an image of Īśāna is led to the southerly hut with a verse "Come quickly to my offering, Śarva ! Om !" Then the consort of the spit-ox (or an image of Mīḍhushī) is led to the northerly part; and to the middle (space) between the two huts, a calf of those two parents (or an image of Jayanta) is led. He then gives them water to drink in the same order in which they have been led to their places, prepares three messes of boiled rice, "spreading under and sprinkling over" Ājya on them and touches the three beasts with those portions of rice, in the same order with appropriate mantras. Then the rites down to the Vyāhṛiti oblations are performed and the mess of boiled rice is sacrificed—the first part of it belonging to the spit-ox with a mantra addressed to God Īśāna, the second part belonging to the consort with a mantra addressed to the consort of Rudra; and the third part belonging to the calf with a mantra addressed to Jayanta 'the conqueror'. Then he cuts off slices from all the three portions of rice and sacrifices the Svishṭakṛit oblation. The cows in the house are placed around the fire, so that they can smell of that sacrifice. Then he walks around all the objects mentioned *viz.* the fire, the three beasts and the other cows of the house, keeping his right side towards them and worships the Śūlagava (or

Īśāna) with the eleven Anuvākas of the Taitt. Saṁh. IV. 5 or with the first and last of them.

The sacrifice of the spit-ox involving the actual killing of the ox etc. is described in the Ā. and P. G. S. According to Ā. the sacrificer (with the Śūlagava sacrifice in view *a long time beforehand has* to bring up an ox, the best specimen of his herd, which has not a variegated skin or leprous spots but has black spots; or a black one or one whose colour approaches that of copper. After selecting it, he should sprinkle it with water mixed with rice and barley from head to tail with the formula "Grow up, agreeable to Rudra the great god". When it grows up into a bull or has cut its teeth, it is ready for the "Śūlagava" According to P. the animal should be one that is sāṇḍa or not gelded or should be a cow because the designation śūlagava admits of the cow also as a sacrificial victim. The place for the sacrifice should be to the east or north-one that cannot be seen from the village (according to P, the sacred fire is to be carried into a forest). The exact time is after mid-night (or after sunrise according to others.)

A learned Brahmin, well-versed in the practice of this sacrifice should be invited to assist in the performance. A fresh branch with leaves is driven into the ground as a sacrificial post; two creeping plants or two Kuśa ropes are taken as two girdles; one of them is tied round the animal's neck and another to the post, and thus the victim is bound by joining the two. The sprinkling with water and the subsequent ritual is the same as at an animal sacrifice, the points of difference being

the following :-The omentum of the animal killed is sacrificed with the formulas "To Hara..Mṛiḍa, Śarva, Śiva, Bhava, Mahādeva, Ugra, Bhīma, Paśupati, Rudra, Śaṇkara, Iśāna !" Svāhā is repeated at the end of each name or it is sacrificed with the formula "To Rudra Svāhā !" only. According to P. the omentum is sacrificed to Rudra, the fat to the Antariksha and the cut-off portions together with the mess of cooked food to Agni, Rudra, Īśāna etc, and this is followed by a sacrifice to Vanaspati and another to Agni Svishṭakṛit at the end. Then Bali offerings are made to the four quarters of the horizon with invocations to Rudra and his hosts in each quarter, on a ring of Kuśa net-work and then to the four quarters with four hymns, this worship of the quarters being a special feature of all sacrifices to Rudra. (P. mentions the Patnī-saṁyāja offerings to Indrāṇī Rudrāṇī, Śarvāṇī, Bhavāṇī and Agni Gṛihapati after the worship of the quarters, which is referred to as "The sprinkling round to the different quarters"). Then the blood of the sacrificial animal is poured to the north of the fire, on rows of Darbha grass or on rings of Kuśa net-work, with a formula invoking the serpents to partake of that blood. Then the serpents take whatever has flowed down there of blood or of the contents of the stomach and entrails. (According to P. the blood is offered on leaves to Rudra and his hosts in the different directions). The husks and chaff of rice, the tail, the feet and the skin of the sacrificial animal should be thrown into the fire or the skin may be turned to some use. According to P.the contents of the stomach and the

entrails besmeared with blood, should either be thrown into the fire or buried in the earth. The śūlagava is a very strange rite in many respects. There is a difference of opinion according to Ā. on the point of partaking of the sacrificial food of the Śūlagava. Besides, nothing belonging to the sacrifice is to be taken to the village as the god may do harm to the people who are to be kept away from the place of the sacrifice ! When the sacrifice is completed, another young animal (destined in the manner described above to grow up to be a victim at a subsequent Śūlagava) should be let loose. He should go home muttering the Śaṁtātīya hymn. If any illness overtakes the cattle, this same god should be sacrificed to, in the midst of the cowstable, with a mess of cooked food which is sacrificed in its entirety. The sacrificial grass and Ājya should be thrown into the fire and his cows should be led through the smoke and then he should walk in the midst of his cattle muttering the Śaṁtātīya hymn.

**SECTION "C" : The Bauḍhya-Vihāra Ceremony.**

The Bauḍhyavihāra or distrbution of Palāśa leaves though mentioned in a separate chapter H. II, 9 is really a part of the Śūlagava as it is a ceremony for propitiating Rudra andhis hosts and for averting evil from cattle and the fields. With 4 Mantras invoking the protecttors and the protectresses of the house and the door, four Palāśa leaves (together with portions of boiled rice Āp.) are put down on the ground. Then ten leaves are put down with the formula "Divine hosts, touch them ?" Again ten leaves more are put down with a similar formula. Then a basket of leaves is made and

a lump of boiled rice is (with the underspreading and sprinkling over of Ājya) put into it. Then going out to his pasture-grounds. he hangs the basket up at a tree with a formula of invocation to Rudra. Then he sprinkles on the cows, sandal, salve, "Surodaka" (Surā and water or rain-water which has fallen while the sun is shining), unground fried grains and cow-dung with a bunch of Dūrvāgrass, with Udumbara, palāśa, Śamī, Vikankaṭa and Aśvattha branches and with a cow-tail uttering the words "Bring luck". (According to ĀP. with his tightly-closed fist full of Darbha grass, he besprinkles (them) with scents, the bull first).

*The sacrifice to Kshetrapati.*

A Sthālīpāka sacred to Kshetrapati is cooked with milk sprinkled over, with Ājya; is taken out from the fire and then the sacrifice is offered on the path used by his cows, *without a fire*, on four or seven leaves. Then an ox representing Kshetrapati is led to his place in the same way as the Īśāna in the Śūlagava. He sacrifices quickly, for the god is 'Pākaḥ' (is wise or has a strong digestion). Then worship is performed with the verses (Tait. Saṁh. 1.1.14.2,3). The Sthālīpāka belonging to Īśāna is given to the Brahmins to eat and that belonging fo Kshetrapati is eaten by his uterine relations or the family custom may be followed in this matter. The numerous minor rites or mantra-recitations

*Minor rites pertaining to cattle.*

in connection with Cattle-keeping which we proceed to describe below, confirm this same conviction that cattle were a highly prized possession. Thus verses invoking Pūshan, Bṛihs-

pati etc. for protection are to be recited when the cows are driven out to the pasture-lands (2) when they are running about (S) (3) when they come back (4) when they are standing still after coming back and before entering the cow-pen (5) when they are entering the stable (6) and when they have settled down into the pen. One of these verses prays that Yakshmā (consum-mption) may not affect the cows. Another interesting feature of cattle-keeping is the making of marks on the cattle. Thus according to Gobhila, if he is desirous of thriving in cattle, when the cows have calved [or on the new-moon day under the Nakshatra Revatī that follows after the Phālguna full-moon according to (S)] he makes marks first on a male and then on a female calf with a sword of udumbara wood and after doing that, recites over the two calves another Mantra. Similarly verses are to be recited when the rope to which the calves are to be bound is spread out and when the calves have been bound to it. Of these rites, those at the driving of cattle, at their coming back and at the tying of the calves with the rope etc. are to be performed daily; others are occasional.

A person who wishes that cattle should prosper, should lick with his tongue, the fore—head of the first-born calf before it is licked by its mother and should gulp with the formula "Thou are the phlegm of the cows". When the cows have calved, he should put wood on the fire in the cow-stable amidst cows at night and [having performed the rites down to the Vyāhṛiti oblations (H)] should sacrifice churned curds with drops of ghee (or a milk oblation H). Another rite

to ensure a thriving condition for the cows, is to sacrifice boiled rice-grains with milk to Agni, Pūshan, Indra and Iśvara and to honour the bull by decorating it and feeding it with rich food etc. The cows are besprinkled with seented water at the end. Exactly similar is the rite to ensure a thriving condition of horses; only Yama and Varuna are added to the above mentioned deities. According to S.G.S. the beestings of the cow that calves first are sacrificed with RV.X,87,17,18 and the beestings of the cow that brings fourth twin-calves should be sacrificed with the Mahāvyāhṛitis and the mother of the twins given to the Brāhmaṇas. If the cows are sick, milk-ricc must be sacrificed in the cow-stable.

*The vṛishotsarga.*

It is note-worthy that the details of this ceremony of cattle-breeding viz the 'vṛshotsarga' in the Gṛhya-Sūtras viz S & P, in which is is described are almost identical (mutual borrowing or a common source are possibilities). On the Kārttika full-moon day or on the day of the Āśvayuja month falling under the Nakshatra Revatī, the fire is made to blaze in the midst of cows and Ājya oblations are sacrificed with appropriate verses. Then he sacrifices from the Sthālīpāka belonging to Pūshan with an invocation to Pūshan. Then he selects a bull of one, two or three colours or a red bull or one that leads the herd or is loved by the herd, perfect in all limbs and the finest in the herd, murmuring the Rudra-hymns. Then that bull is adorned, as also four of the finest young cows of the herd and then he says "This young bull, I give you as your husband, sporting with him, your lover, walk about etc."

When the bull is in the midst of the cows, he recites over them the Ṛig-Verses X, 169. With the milk of all those cows he should cook milk-rice and feed the Brahmins with it. In the opinion of some (P) an animal is sacrificed in this rite, in which case the ritual is the same as that for the spit-ox. The Āśvayuja sacrifice is finally an important ceremony concerning cattle though only Gobhila expressly points out its connection with the cows, whose prosperity it ensures. For a detailed description the reader is referred to the chapter on religion.

SECTION 'D': The Veneration for the Cow.

That the cow or the bull was a precious possession has already been noted. A cow or a bull constitutes the fee or Dakshiṇā at many a sacrifice or a less elaboreat rite, such as the first Sthālīpāka, etc. The germ of the later and present-day veneration for the cow as the abode of the gods is perhaps traceable to the Mantra part "माता रुद्राणां, दुहिता वसूनां, स्वसादित्यानाममृतस्य नाभिः ।" addressed to the cow ("The mother of Rudras, the daughter of the Vasus, the sister ot the Ādityas and the navel of Amṛita"). An indication of the regard for cows is seen in the prescription of an anadhyāya or interruption of study in the presence of cows that have eaten nothing. Perhaps this reverence for cows was responsible for the relaxation of the prescription regarding a cow-sacrifice in the Ashṭakā rite where S. proposes a substitute for the-sacrifice of a cow or goat on that occasion. "Or he may optionally offer food to a cow or he may burn down brush-wood in the forest and say "This is my Ashṭakā". A cow suckling her calf was not to be

announced to another by a Snātaka and persons driving in a chariot were to descend from it to do homage to cows if hc comes across them. A bull is one of the holy objects that a performer of the Śākvara vow has to look at.

It is a very interesting problem to investigate as to when the reverence for the cow which has all along been there, so far got the upper hand as to bring about a prohibition of cow-killing and beef-eating. The onslaughts led by Buddhism and Jainism against Hiṁsā had much to do with it no doubt but it appears that it was also the growing intensity of the Kṛishṇa cult wnich regarded the cows as the favourites of Kṛishna that led to the deification of the cow, which has continued to this day as one of the fcrvent religious sentiments of the Hindus.

# Chapter XI.

## Flora & Fauna.

### PART 1. THE RV. PERIOD.

*Trees and plants.*

The Aśvattha (ficus religiosa) is the most important tree; its fruit (pippala) is described as sweet and the food of birds. Its wood was used for Soma vessels. The RV. perhaps refers to this very tree[1] when it mentions "the tree with fair foliage" in whose shade the blessed revel with Yama. The Nyagrodha (Ficus Indica) is however missing. The name 'Vibhīdaka' of the large tree Terminalia Bellerica was also the name for 'dice' which were nothing else but the nuts of this tree, probably brown in colour being mentioned as 'babhravaḥ' in the Hymn of the Gambler (X. 34). The Soma is described as growing in the mountains and must have been easily procurable in the beginning. The lotus-flower has not yet become a subject for similes and metaphors; rice (as noted already) was unknown, Yava only being cultivated.

*Grain.*

*Fauna: the birds.*

The Haṁsa (wild goose or swan) is described as swimming in the water and flying in a line. The Chakravāka is mentioned once. Mayurīs or pea-hens are described as removing poison and śukas or parrots are also referred to.

Cows and bullocks have already been mentioned. The Mahisha or buffalo was known. The horse next in

1. Macdonell H.S.L. p. 149

*Cattle.*

importance to cattle was used for bearing the war-chariot and for horse-races–a favourite sport. It is doubtful whether it was ridden though very likely it was. Wealth in steeds was often prayed for and the grandeur of the Aśvamedha sacrifice shows the importance of the horse in general. Sheep, goats, asses and dogs were other domesticated animals. Dogs were used for hunting and for guarding the cattle at night and tracking them. The cat was not yet domesticated. The monkey (kapi) and the bear (Ṛiksha) are rarely mentioned. Not so the Vṛika (or wolf) which is frenquently referred to. The Varāha or boar was hunted with dogs. The tiger is unknown to the Ṛig–veda which refers to lions, however. The elephant is yet a novel creature and described as 'Hasti Mṛiga' (a beast with a protruding hand or trunk) and not as a mere "Hastī" as later.

## PART. 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS & BRĀHMṆAS.

The Aśvattha, under which the gods sit in the third heaven, the Nyagrodha or Bunyan tree and different forms of jujube and cucumbers are mentioned. The

*Trees and plants*

soma is described as brought from long distances and substitutes were found out on account of its rarity. Its present-day substitute produces a nauseating effect quite unlike that of the Soma-juice as described in the RV.

The white Yajur-Veda attirbutes to Haṁsas the power of separating the soma from water and to the

*Fauna. Birds.*

kraunch-bird (Curlew), the power of separating water from milk which classical Sanskrit poetry ascribed to the Haṁsa, The YV. also refers to the parrot as *so tamed* as to imitate human speech.

*Beasts.*

Buffaloes though known (see the above part) were not milked. The milk of the cow alone was used in the sacrifice. The elephant was tamed and guarded but whether he had entered the army cannot be known! Similarly the horse was ridden but was cavalry a part of the army? The place held by the lion in the ṚV. is taken by the tiger in the other Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas because the Āryans had now advanced eastward to Bengal: the home of the tiger.

## PART 3. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION 'A': The Fauna.

Among the animals of this period, the one that claims attention first owing to its importance in the G.S. ritual is the serpent. Not only were the paths infested by snakes (H) but during the rainy season *i. e.* from the month of Śrāvaṇa to Mārgaśirsha, there is a general direction to all to sleep on raised beds for fear of the snakes. For the cure of serpent-bites there is a rite (P) consisting of sprinkling the person with water to the accompaniment of Mantras. The Śrāvaṇa sacrifice to the serpents which is described in detail in all G. S. shows that the dread of snakes was very keenly felt, particularly during the 4 months of the year mentioned above, when sleeping on the ground was abandoned. As the

different G. S. give different details, we follow the description in S.

*The Śrāvaṇa sacrifice to the serpents.*

On the full-moon day of the month of Śrāvaṇa (which generally falls under the Nakshatra Śravishṭhā or Śravaṇa), the house-holder offers the so-called Śrāvaṇa oblation of the flour of fried barley or of cooked food with the words "To Vishṇu Svāhā! To Śravaṇa Svāhā! To the full-moon of Śrāvana Svāhā! To the rainy season Svāhā! The domestic fire is established outside the house. [ the Gobhila G. S. gives the following details in this connection. The surface of a spot to the east of the house is besmeared with cow-dung and the fire taken from the domestic fire is carried forward to it. Four spots to the four sides of the fire in the four directions are then besmeared to the extent of more than one prakrama (step). Then one handful of barley grains are fried in a dish and put on the fire without burning them. Then in a mortar established to the west of fire, the grains are husked, ground carefully to flour, poured into a wooden cup (Chamasa) and covered with a winnowing basket ]. To proceed with Sāṅkhāyana's description:—fried grain and the flour of barley are mixed with butter and then sacrificed with the words "To the Lord of the celestial serpents, to the celestial serpents Svāhā!" Then water is poured into a new water-pot placed to the north of the fire with the words, "May the celestial serpents wash themselves?" Then he makes movements with a comb saying "May the celestial serpents comb themselves?" Then he pours out portions of paints with the words "May the serpents paint

themselves ?" He then offers flowers with the words, "May the celestial serpents tie these to themselves !" He offers a thread with "May the divine serpents dress themselves ?" Small quantities of collyrium are then scattered with "May the divine serpents anoint their eye-lashes ". He offers them a mirror with "May the divine serpents look at themselves ?" Then he makes a Bali offering with the words "Divine serpents, this is your Bali" (no one is to step between the sacrificer and the Bali while he is offering it Ā. & P.). In this very manner, are offerings made to the deities, presiding over the air, the directions and the earth. The Mantras are repeated thrice each time, the first part addressed to the Lord of the celestial serpents in a higher voice and second part addressed to the celestial serpents in a lower voice each time. In this way, let him offer every day at night silently with a spoon in small portions from the remainder of the flour stowed away in a hidden place, a Bali of the flour of fried barley with water, till the time of the Pratyavarohaṇa ceremony and the wife should put down the materials of the Bali offerings silently on the ground. From now onwards, he ascends (*i. e.* uses) the (high) couch or bed. In P. there are the following novel details. All that area round the house which he wishes the serpents not to enter he should go round three times, sprinkling an uninterrupted stream of water with the verses: "Drive away, O White one ! with thy foot, with the fore-foot, with the hind-foot, these seven children of Varuṇa and all the daughters of the king's tribe. Within the dominion of the white one, the serpent has seen nobody. To the White one, the son of Vidarva ! adoration ! Svāhā !" The remainder of the fried grains which are

given to the people are eaten by them grain by grain *i. e.* not in lumps or handfuls. Ā. adds that the serpent-Bali is offered in the evening and in the morning until the Pratyavarohaṇa ceremony or he may offer the total number of Balis corresponding to the days until the Pratyavarohaṇa once for all on the day of the Śrāvaṇa full-moon. The G. & Āp. prescribe the offering of a Sthālipāka after sun-set on this day.

*The ceremony of Redescent (Pratya varohaṇa) or the Āgrahāyaṇī rite*

The pratyavarohaṇa (*i. e.* the ceremony of redescent) is the concluding ceremony of the rites sacred to the serpents after which sleeping on high bedsteads may be given up. The ritual is pretty much the same as above. We follow principally the description in S, The time for it is the full—moon of Mārgaśīrsha or under the Nakshatra Rohiṇī or under the Proshṭhapadās. In the morning he takes a handful of śamī leaves, Madhūka flowers, reeds, Apāmārga plants, Śirisha, Udumbara and Kuśa shoots and jujube fruits and an earth-clod taken out of a furrow and puts all this near a water-pot. Then he quickly mutters the Mahāvyāhṛitis and the sāvitṛī verse and repeatedly dips it all into the water-pot with the hymn Rv. I. 97 to drive away all evil from persons in his family and then pours out the water to the north. Then (it seems) after sunset (Cf.Ā.), he sacrifices oblations of Ājya (milk-rice oblations are prescribed in G) with the words "To Takshaka Vaiśaleya Svāhā ! "With the verse RV, 1,90,9 he sweeps the floor with a Palāsā branch, spinkles it with water and then spreads out a layer of grass with the verse "Be soft, O

Earth (RV.1.22.15). Then they lie down on their right sides, next on their left sides; again on the right and left sides and then they lie on that layer of grass and after-wards, where they like (on the ground). According to P. on this day, a Sthālīpāka is prepared: two Ājya oblations are offered as at the Śrāvaṇa sacrifice and other oblations are offered with verses addressed to the Night (the full-moon-night of Mārgaśirsha). Then he makes oblations of the cooked food to Soma, to the Nakshatra Mrigaśiras, to the full-moon of that month and to water. After eating of the sacrificial food, he throws the remainder of the flour of fried grains prepared as in the Śrāvaṇa sacrifice into a basket and then follow the same rites as at the Śrāvaṇa sacrifice described above, down to their cleaning themselves. After the cleaning he says "The Bali offering is finished". Then they spread out to the west of the fire, a layer of straw and a new garment and, they both (the house-holder and his wife). put on new or unused garments. Then the Brahman is made to sit down southward and a water-pot, a śami branch, an earth-clod taken out of a furrow and a stone are placed to the north and then he looks at the fire and utters a praise of Agni. To the west of the fire he joins his hands and holds them towards the east. Then with the three verses Vāj. Saṁ.XXI.6-8 they ascend the layer of straw. He next addresses the Brahman "Brahmin ! we will redescend" When the Brahman has given permission they redescend with the words "Life ! fame ! glory !" etc. Initiated persons murmur the verse "May a good winter etc. be bestowed

*The ceremony according to Pāraskara.*

on us." The order and manner of Redescent among family members are as follows:–The house-holder southward, the wife to the north of him and then the other persons of the house so that each younger one lies more to the north. With the verse (Vāj. Saṁh. XXXV, 21) they then lie down on their right sides with their heads turned to the east. They arise with the verse "Up with life etc." This they repeat twice again with the Brahmins' permission. This finishes the ceremony after which they sleep on the ground for four months or as long as they like. Ā. prescribes a renovation of the house on the Mārgaśirsha full-moon in connection with the Pratyavarohaṇa by spreading out a new roof, giving a new coating to the walls and by levelling the floor. The G.G.S, gives an interesting description of the way in which the members of the family sit upon and lie down on the layer of grass. The house holder sits down there on the southern side, then without an interval, the others according to their age and then without an interval their wives, each with her children are to lie down on their right sides.

So much about the serpent. A Mantra in the Śrāvaṇa rite described above prays for the destruction of the Maśaka (the gnat or mosquito), the gadfly and the Vyadhāra or the Stinging worm. Bees and ants were there, of course. Bees forming honey-combs and ants making anthills in the house were ominous events requiring the muttering of Mantras.

Cows and bulls, horses and elephants and camels and asses have already been mentioned as draught—

*Quadrupeds.*

animals in the chapter on House-building. Among inauspicious sights (H) are a solitary jackal, and a she-wolf. So wolves and jackals moving in packs were known. The dog was an inauspicious creature. Balis are offered to dogs. The barking of a dog or the hooting of a jackal interrupted Veda-study. Sheep and goats were of course known.

Birds of prey and owls were inauspicious sights. A dove sitting on the earth was not a good omen. The sight of a black bird (the term including the crow, of course) was not holy and was to be avoided by a Snātaka for 3 nights after the Snāna atleast. We meet with a list of birds (in the description of the Annaprāśana ceremony) whose flesh may be given to the child. Thus P.1.19.7. seq. "(The father) feeds the child with the flesh of the bird called *Bhāradvāja*, if he desires that the child should have fluency of speech; with the flesh of a *partridge* if he desires the child to have ample nourishment: with *fish*, if swiftness is desired, with flesh of the *Kṛikasha* if long life is desired; and the flesh of the bird *Ati* if desirous of holy lustre.

The above list by no means exhausts the creatures known in the Gṛihya-sūtras days, With our limited goal in view, we have mentioned only those that have been mentioned expressly in the Gṛihya-Sūtras. Thus the cat, the mouse, the frog, the sparrow, the Haṁsa and the mungoose were certainly known though not mentioned; the Dharma-sūtras explicity mention them. The tiger and the lion were certainly known.

## SECTION "B" : FLORA.

*Trees and plants: Trees.*

Quite a large number of trees are mentioned. The Udumbara (Ficus Glomerata), the Palāśa (Butea Frondosa), Śamī, Vaikaṅkaṭa and the Aśvattha (the holy fig-tree) are referred to as supplying fuel-sticks and wood for the Darvī (a wooden ladle or spoon). The leaves and blossoms of the Kiṁśuka (same as the Palāśa) tree are used in the Srāvaṇa rite for serpents. A Vanaspati or old tree was revered. In the chapter on house-building it will be noted that an Aśvattha tree on the east side, Plaksha and Nyagrodha (the waved-leaf fig-tree and the Indian Fig-tree respectively) on the west and Udumbara on the north side of the house were supposed to forebode danger from fire, early death, hostility and eye-diseases respectively and the Sun, Yama, Varuṇa and Prajāpati are there mentioned as their presiding deities in order. A stick of Vīratara (this is Bamboo according to Śrīdharaśāstri Pāthak[1]) is used for parting the hair. Other trees mentioned are the Parṇa (the same as the Palāśa again) the Khadira (Acacia catechu) and the Bilva (Ægle Marmelos or wood-apple). In the "Friend-ship rite" figures the "Sidhraka" tree whose fuel is there used. Flowers of the Madhūka tree are tied to the bride's body at the marriage ceremony, where also the branches, leaves and milky say of a tree *with a masculine name* are to be put into the pot containing the Stheya water. The fruits of the Badara (jujube) tree are mixed with

1 Marathi translation of the Pāraskara G. S. : published : 1930. Poona.

Piṇḍas in an Ābhyudayika śrāddha, along with curds and fried grain. Pounded seeds of the fruit of the Karañja tree are used for rubbing the body with, along with other ointments. Leaves of the Pichumanda or Nimba tree are chewed by the relatives of the dead at the door before entering the house after the funeral. We meet with a list of trees finally in connection with the material of the fuel-sticks. They should be normally of Palāśa or Khadira wood but may optionally be of the wood of any tree except the Vibhīdaka (the nuts of which were used as dice in the ṚV. Period.), Tilvaka (same as the Lodhra tree), Bādhaka Nīva, Nimba, Rāja-vṛiksha, Śālmali (Silk-cotton tree), Aralu, Dadhitthaka (wood-apple), and Śleshmātaka trees. Samidhs (or fuel-sticks) of the Āragvadha (Cassia Fistula) tree are used in the Sarpabali rite.

*Plants and creepers.*

In S. II. 14, 12 we are told that a Bali is to be offered to the herbs in a place where the herbs are kept. This place in the house perhaps corresponds to the modern nursery. There was implicit belief in the efficacy of herbs as the address to the herbs 'ओषधे त्रायस्वैनम्' (Protect him, O Herb) in the chūdākaraṇa rite shows. The root of the Adhyāṇḍa plant is pounded and the juice sprinkled into the wife's right nostril at the Garbhādhāna ceremony. The juice of the stalk of the Soma plant (this probably is not the original Soma plant but a substitute) was sprinkled into the wife's right nostril at the Puṁsavana. With the juice of the roots of the Kākātani, machakachāṭani, kośātaki plants, of the egg-plant and the indigo-plant, the place

of confinement is besmeared to drive away the Rākshasas. Flowers of the Apāmārga and Sadāpushpī plants are mentioned in the Samāvartana rite, as mixed with the cut-off hair-ends of the would-be Snātaka before the latter are thrown away. Plants with thorns and milky juice as well as Apāmarga, Śāka ( pot-herb ) Tilvaka and Parivyadha plants, growing on the site of a house should be dug out. The Śirīsha plant is referred to. Avakā and Śīpāla water-plants are put into the pits for the posts in the building of a house to guard against fire. The Avakā plant is put into a pit near the funeral fire and the soul is supposed to escape through it and then mount to heaven along the path of smoke. The juice extracted out of the roots of the Siṁhī plants laid in the house for three days previously is put into the wife's right nostril if she does not conceive. The Uśīra roots are given to the serpents (in the Śrāvaṇa rite) The Sthagara plant is mentioned as a fragrant substance.

*Varieties of grass.*

Kuśa or Darbha blades and grass are considered holy and constantly used in the shape of Pavitrakas ( strainers ) for making seats and for being spread round the fire in the Gṛihya-ritual. An offering of the Gavedhuka grass mixed with boiled-rice grains is made to avert disease. The burning of Kaksha grass or brush-wood is allowed as a substitute for an animal sacrifice in the Ashṭakā rite. Vīriṇa grass

is auspicious and should grow on the site for a house. The girdle at the Upanayana may be made of Muñja grass for the Brahmin and Mūrvā grass for the Vaiśya. Other kinds of grass proposed as materials of girdles are Kāśa and Tambala. If Kuśa grass cannot be had for the Barhis, then any grass may be taken with the exception of śuka, śīrya, Balvaja, mūtaka, Tala and Luṇṭha. Erakā grass was used as a seat in the Samāvartana rite.

# Chapter XII

## Trade & Commerce.

### PART. 1. THE RV. PERIOD.

*Trade & currency*

An extensive trade was carried on, cows and bullocks and 'Nishkas', being the mediums of exchange. The 'Nishka' was probably no coin though the origin of currency may be traced to it. It was probably a gold or silver ornament like a neck-lace according to Keith[1] and Macd[2] and this is not surprising as gold ornaments and even jewellery were often given away as gifts and took the place of money in trade affairs. The rivers of the North-west are referred to as yielding gold. Silver is not mentioned. Whether iron was known or not will depend on the exact meaning of "Ayas". It often means "Metal' only. Its colour may be inferred to be reddish and as the use of bronze always procedes that of iron in the progress of civilisation, "Ayas" may indicate "Copper or bronze" but this is by no means certain and iron may have been known.

*Sea-borne commerce.*

The Sindhu (Indus) was the natural outlet to the sea but whether, the sea was known and whether, if known, extensive maritime trade went on, are points on which scholars hold divergent views. Macd.[2] holds that the ocean was known from hearsay only :-Metaphors used by a people familiar with

1. C. H. I. 2. H. S. L.

the ocean are lacking in the RV. The numerous mouths of the Indus, are ignored and there are but few references to the fishing-trade. The word (Samudra) occurs no doubt but it might mean the very broad and wide stream of the lower Indus as well. The necessaries of occan-shipping such as rudder, anchor, masts or sails are not mentioned but boats or canoes of the primitive typə [*i. e.* tree-trunks hollowed or dug out and propelled by oars or paddles (Aritra) and useful for river navigation only] are referred to. The second view is: even if the sea was known, extensive maritime trade was not carried on. Mr. Vaidya[1] holds that 'Samudra' in X,190,1 must mean 'the ocean'. The word Sindhu was used for "River" as well as 'Sea'. Besides X,136,5 refers to eastern and western oceans and there was commercial intercourse by sea between the Punjab, and Mesapotamia. It may be pointed out in support of Mr. Vaidya's contention that RV.II, 39,4 and I,25,7 refer to the art of building large boats (almost ships) but this is uncertain.

## PART. 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

The term "Śreshrhin" a wealthy merchant is often used and lending money at interest was a common commercial transaction as there was a special name for a "Usurer". The 'Nishka-originally a gold ornament (see the preceeding part) gradually took the place of the cow, as a unit of value and medium of exchange. A regular system of coinage or currency is perhaps not in vogue yet. In the Brāhmaṇas, we meet with the Śatamāna:

*Trade & currency.*

1. H. V. L.

a piece of gold equivalent in weight to a hundred kṛishṇalas; the kṛishṇala–a kind of berry-being the unit of weight. The merchants perhaps in the days of the Brāhmaṇas used the Śatamāna currency. Silver, tin and lead were known in addition to gold. The distinction between red 'ayas' (probably copper) and black ayas (iron) drawn by the AV shows perhaps that the distinction was a recent discovery. Upanishads distinguish between kārashṇāyas (or steel) and loha (or black iron).

There is no doubt that the sea was known in this period. As the AV. shows some knowledge of it but there is yet a difference of opinion among scholars as to the existence of extensive sea-trade (with Babylon for example) though the Śatapatha and the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇas mention the boat-man, the oarsman and the pole-man.

## PART. 3. PĀṆINI

Pāṇini refers to imports from the north *i. e.* from countries from Persia to Tibet and the Vaṁśādi-gaṇa of Pāṇini enumerates several forest products such as Vaṁśa, Kuṭaja, Ikshu (sugar-cane) and Madya (liquor). Many coins like Paṇa, Kārshāpaṇa, Pāda, Vāha etc. and measures of weight like Āḍhaka, Āchita, Pātra, Droṇa and Prastha are mentioned by him.

## PART. 4. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION. "A" : Trade & Commerce.

The rite of Paṇyasidhhi or success in trade (H.1,48) [in which a portion of the particular article of trade is

*Trading defined.*

cut off and sacrificed with the verse "If, O God! we carry on trade to acquire (new) wealth by means of our (old) wealth, let Soma, Agni Indra, Bṛihaspati and Īśāna bestow lustre thereon] shows that trade and commerce were living activities of corporate life. The Vaiśyas principally seem to be the commercial class. Even food was a marketable commodity because the relations of a deceased person after burning the dead body were not to cook food in the house during the period of impurity but to buy it (P) (Were there public eating houses ? Perhaps food could be sold privately by individuals). The Kh. G. S. speaks of the buying of a Nyagrodha shoot (not dry, not touched by worms, with fruit on both sides etc.) with 21 barley corns or beans in the Puṁsavana ceremony. Gobhila explains this very operation as follows: A Mantra consisting of seven parts is repeated part by part, while the buying is being done, and for every part recited, 3 beans or barley corns are given to the buyer or placed at the root of the tree. (This appears to be a symbolical buying and selling just like the symboiical purchase of the Soma plant described in the Brāhmṇa works). Fees were made over in *kind* rather than in coin because a vessel, garment, a cow or an ornament are often mentioned as fees etc.

*Hotels.*

*The exchangne medium.*

SECTION 'B' : Industries.

Quite a large number of implements, vessels and other articles were manufactured. Thus implements and vessels of copper, iron, earthen-ware and stone are men-

tioned (by Āp.). Baskets, upper and lower mill-stones mortar and pestle, cups, ladles, dishes and spoons and wooden swords: all these were used in the ritual also. Kaṭas or rush-mats made of Vīriṇa grass were used in marriage for the couple to sit on. The Kośakāra or silk-worm was known and silken as well as linen, hempen, cotton and woolen cloth was known (compare the different kinds of cloth or upper garments prescribed for the different castes at the Upanayana). That *spinning* and *weaving* were common in every house is clear from Āp. IV. 10.10 where we are told that the boy is to put on a garment spun and woven on the same day. This explains the constant insistence on the use of an "Ahatam Vāsaḥ" (Unused garment) for many sacraments; as 'Ahatam' does not mean 'Unwashed'[1] so much as 'brand new' or 'unused' (*i. e.* spun and woven specially for the occasion). Again a full spindle or Chātra is referred to in the Sīmantonnayana ceremony (P). Associated with this, was the dying industry, as garments of different colours are prescribed for students of different castes. Besides, when the bride has taken her bath, a new dyed garment was to be put on her.

*Cottage industries.*

Gold, silver, iron, copper, brass and other metats were known though the G. S. specifically refer to a few only such as gold (in connection with 'Golden spoons') and brass ('Kaṁsa') for making gongs etc.

*The metals.*

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[1] This is unfortunately the invariable rendering of the word in the S. B. E. Volumes on the Gṛihya-Sūtras : XXIX and XXX.

## Chapter XIII.

### The Occupations and Professions: arts and crafts

#### PART 1. THE RV. PERIOD.

*The occupations of the various Varṇas.*

Next to cattle-breeding which was the staple occupation, came agriculture; fighting also was quite a regular occupation as the existence of the warrior-clars implies. As has been noted in the chapters on "The caste system' 'Education' and 'Religion'" the institution of the sacrifice was not in a simple and elementery stage; the division of priestly functions was already formed with 3 or 4 classes of priests and the 'Frog-hymn' refers to the singing of Sāmans by the priests in a Some-sacrifice. So the priestly class had dedicated themselves to the specialised occupations of officiation at sacrifices and preservation of the sacred hymnology of the Āryans by conducting Vedic classes (Vide the chapter on Education). The Vaiśya class must have chiefly taken to agriculture, commerce, cattle-breeding and the various crafts and industries and the Śūdra class was probably engaged in service of all kinds. But the castes had not become *occupation-tight* yet and among the poets and priests of the RV. were to be found Kshatriyaṣ and all the three higher castes took to cattle-breeding.

*Hunting.*

Hunting was not merely an amusement but also a profession. There are references to the bow and

arrow, traps and snares used by the hunters. Lions were captured in snares, antelopes in pits, and boars were hunted with dogs. Birds were caught with nets spread on the ground. Many a metaphor is derived by the ṚV. poet from the fashioning of chariots and the carpenter was an important professional, who made wheels and the wheel-chariots and was a joiner at the same time. He also built ships or boats (II. 36. 4 etc). The smith worked on Ayas (and whether he was a copper-smith or iron-smith will depend on what meaning we attach to 'Ayas'). He smelt the ore in a furnace. The bellows consisted of the wings of a bird to blow the fire. The smith made household utensils of metal such as kettles etc. Earthenware and wooden vessels as well as metal ones were used for eating and drinking from. (ṚV. VII. 63.1 refers to the tanner's art and working in leather. The skin of oxen was worked up into bow-trings and straps. Among other industries (which appear to be home—and cottage—industries) may be mentioned rope-making (VII, 84, 2), plaiting of mats from grass or reeds and sewing and weaving. Money-lending as a profession followed by Vaiśyas as well as Brāhmaṇas has already been mentioned.

*Carpentry.*

*Pottery.*

*Leather industry.*

## PART 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS & BRĀHMAṆAS

The list of Victims at the Purushamedha given in the Yajurveda, gives a detailed picture of the occupations, professions, arts, crafts and industries of the time. The principle of division of labour seems to have been well

established. Thus the list includes hunters, fishermen, fire-rangers, ploughers, cattle-attendents, surākaras (wine-makers), different classes of servants, makers of jewels, basket-makers, rope-makers, washermen, astrologers, barbers, cooks, door-keepers, smelters, foot-men, messengers, seasoners of food, potters, smiths, professional acrobats, and players on drums and flutes. The taming of elephants is mentioned as an occupation. Dying, embroidery, basket-making are occupations associated with women as also sewing and weaving because the Atharva-veda describes in one place,—Night and Day (personified as sisters) weaving the web of the year alternately with threads that never break nor end. Money-lending of course continued to be a profession.

## PART 3. THE GṚIHYA—SŪTRAS

Agriculture was as stated in Chapter X the staple occupation of the people and cattle-keeping closely associated with it was equally important. The very system of caste, the foundation of the social structure, implies the recognition of a multiplicity of occupations, and professions and a clear distribution of them among the different castes.

*Distribution of occupations among the 4 castes.*

Thus as has been noted in the chapter on "The caste system" sacrificing for oneself and for others as priests, study and teaching of the veda, giving and receiving of gifts, were at once the duties and occupations, privileges and obligations of the Brāhmaṇas. Of these, performance of sacrifice, study of the veda and giving of gifts were the common duties of the Rājanya and the Vaiśya, the

other two twice-born castes. That the patronage of Kings was sought by the Brahmins is clear from the prayers which often ran as "May Kings be as firm as the Dhruva star" Fighting, conquering and ruling, in short all martial occupations, were peculiar to the Rājanya which term itself shows that the members of the Kshatriya class were either kings of states (that ranged in extent from a country to a small town) or their relatives. Agriculture and cattle-keeping which formed the staple occupations of the masses in general as well as trade and commerce were in the hands of the Vaiśyas and service fell to the lot of the Śūdras.

*Other professions. The tonsorial art.*

Among other professions, that of the tonsorial artist-the barber receives prominent notice. The barber cuts a prominent figure in the two sacraments concerning hair-cutting viz-Chūḍā-Karma and the Godāna, (for a detailed description whereof, the reader is referred to the section on Hair-dressing in the chapter on Dress and Decoration. The barber receives a gift on both these occasions.

*Spinning & Weaving.*

It is an apparently strange fact that where as the tonsorial artist is a prominently recognised professional from the most ancient times, the sartorial artist-the tailor is hardly ever mentioned. Though the argument of non-mention is always unsafe, it may be said without contradiction that sewing-operations or tailoring hardly played any important part in the dress-outfit of the ancient Āryans. An upper and

*Variety of cloth.*

lower garment which were two detached and whole pieces completed their clothing equipment. Spinning and weaving seem to be almost domestic occupations. The goddesses who spun and wove are prayed to (H.G.S.) and that explains the variety of cloth such as cotton, hempen, woolen etc. There is a curious prescription regarding the use of an 'Ahatam' (an 'Unwashed'[1]) garment for religious purposes, so often repeated in the G. S. that it calls for closer investigation. "Ahatam" can certainly not mean that washing was discouraged and that therefore cleanliness was at a discount in holy rites. The meaning seems to be that brand new garments recently spun and woven for the occasion were so easily available that their use could be enjoined on every occasion without inconvenience. The reference to Agni as 'Bheshajasya Kartā' in H.G.S. indicates the existence of the medical profession. The reader is referred to the chapter on Health, Hygiene etc. for information about it.

*Medical profession.*

Washing and dying were quite well-known. Reference to garments dyed with red cloth (H.G.S.) madder or with indigo (H.G.S.) as suitable for a student are found and garments of different colours, a reddish-yellow one (for the Brahmin) a light red one (for the Kshatriya) and a yellow one for the Vaiśya at the Upanayana are prescribed.

*The Washerman,*

1. This is the S.B.E. translation of the word: See last chapter.

*Basket-making & Manual labour.*

Manual labour was insisted on, in the case of the snātaka who was not to work with implements worn out by use. Making baskets of leaves is mentioned. Similarly the improvising of temporary Kuṭīs or huts is prescribed in such a manner as to shew that it was easy for any householder.

*Hunting.*

Hunting is mentioned as a common occupation and does not appear to have been confined exclusively to the Kshatriya class.

*Butcher,*

The butcher's profession was an important one. In the animal sacrifice, the butcher was so indispensable that there was a priest known as the Śamitṛi who played the part of a holy butcher in that sacrifice. Sometimes the host himself uses the knife in killing an animal as an offering for the guest. The barber played the part of a butcher in kiiling the Argha cow.

*Service.*

Service was confined as noted above to the Śūdras. That there were servants 'who would run away' is seen from the "Utūla-parimeha"-the magic rite to be performed to prevent it.

That there were many other professions though they are not expressly mentioned is certain. Thus the use of ornaments of gold and jewels implies the existence of the gold-smith. The teacher's profession was a holy one (vide the chapter on education). The carpenter, the smith and the tanner, though not expressly mentioned were certainly other professional workers.

# Chapter XIV

## PART. I. THE ṚV. PERIOD.

### The Ancient P. W. D. House-building etc.

*Houses and Means of communication;- Roads etc.*

As there is not much evidence of city-life in the Rv. elaborate structures of houses or buildings could hardly be referred to. Dr. Keith seems to hold that houses were made of wood in this period. The beams seem to have made of bamboo, the name for both being the same (vaṁśa). Indra in the RV. is often described as destroying hundreds of strong-holds of the Dasyus, called "Pūr". This "Pūr" was probably an earth-work strengthened with a stockade or stones and can not mean a 'city' or a 'town' as they are not described as inhabited. Can it be said however, that city or town life was altogether unknown? Villages as well as cities are, according to Prof. Ghate[1] mentioned in I,44,10 and I.114.1 The 'forts' perhaps were a series of concentric walls.

The existence of pathways and roads and the usual means of communication and transport is amply borne out by the references to Pūshan as the protector of the paths, to ships on the sea, to chariots (Ratha) and carts (anas) on land. The Aśvins are credited with ships moving in the air (antariksha). Does that mean something like the modern air—ship? The reference to artificial water-ways [कुल्या in III 45.3 and खनित्रिमा आपः in VII 49 2] makes it probable that irrigation was known.

## PART 2. THE OTHER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

*Houses*

Houses were made of wood perhaps even in this period. The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka refers to the City of Kuber as a city of 100 gates, castles and big streets.

*Means of communication*

Chariots drawn by mules are mentioned. Silver carriages and elephants covered with gilded cloth are mentioned in the Ait. Br.

## PART. 3. THE ŚRAUTA-SŪTRAS

People generally travelled on foot and there were horses that could be ridden. A chariot drawn by mules is praised as going fast and carrying a fair burden. Chariots are recommended as good Dakshiṇā.

## PART 4. GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION 'A' : House—building.

*Introductory.*

It appears that house-building was a pretty common event as all Gṛihya-Sūtras lay down rules about it in great detail. The India of those days, it appears, lived mostly in the villages and open spaces or sites for houses were easily available without cost for a large number of people of the three higher castes who could afford to build. Only the śūdra is not mentioned in the directions regarding the colours of the soil auspicious or appropriate to particular castes (which means he had not the freedom

1. Lectures on Rigveda.

of choosing a site and building there on ). There is no reference to any difficulty, restriction or preliminary operation of payment etc, in the selection of the site, provided it appears there was no encroachment. It is not however clear whether land (for building houses on) was acquired with or without purchase.

*Selection of the site.*

The Ā. G. S. gives the most detailed instructions: The ground upon which he intends to build should be undisputed property first of all, then it should be non-salinous, with herbs and trees growing or one on which much kuśa and Vīriṇa grass grows. It should be compact, one-coloured, not swampy, not dry, not surrounded by sandy tracts and free from the danger of inundations (G). He should root out from the soil, plants with thorns and milky juice as well as Apāmārga. Tilvaka, Parivyādha plants and potherbs. That is the most auspicious spot, where the waters flowing from all sides to a central point go round the resting-place keeping it on their right side and then flow off to the east or to the north. (Does this mean that a house had detached blocks, one being a rest-house and another a provision-room etc ?) Upon the spot from where the waters flow off, the provision-room should be built because then it becomes rich in food. If the assembly-room (or drawing-room) should be built on a spot which is inclined towards the south, the young men in such an assembly-room become gamblers, quarrelsome and short-lived; that assembly-hall will be lucky and free from gambling, which is built on a spot where the waters flow off easily in all directions ! *The ground is exa-*

*mined in the following manner*:–A pit knee-deep is dug and filled again with the very earth which has been taken out of it. If the earth reaches out of it, the ground is excellent; if it is level, it is of middle quality, if it does not fill up it should be rejected. Another test is this:–After sun-set, he should fill the pit with water and leave it in that condition during the night. In the morning, if he finds there is water in it, the ground is excellent, if it is moist it is of middle quality, if it gets dry it is to be rejected. A Brāhmaṇa should select a soil, that is white in colour, of sweet taste, and with sand on the surface. Red, is excellent for a Kshatriya and yellow (black: G) for a Vaiśya. G. gives other points for selection for the different castes:–The soil on which Darbha grass grows should be chosen by one who is desirous of holy lustre (*i. e.* generally a Brahmin); that covered with big sorts of grass by one who is desirous of strength (a Kshatriya]; that covered with tender grass by one who is desirous of cattle (generally a Vaiśya). If an Aśvattha tree is on the east side of the site, Plaksha and Nyagrodha trees on the west side and Udumbara on the north side, it should be avoided because the trees bring danger from fire, early death, hostility and eye-diseases respectively. The trees should be removed and replanted in other places after sacrificing to the Sun, Yama, Varuṇa and Prajāpati, the presiding deities of the trees in order.

*The form of the site.*

Then a thousand furrows should be drawn over the site thus selected and it should be measured off as quadrangular, with equal sides to each of the directions or as an oblong quadrangle (according to G. the site may have either the form of a brick or a

round *island*). According to S., a line is drawn three times round the building-area with an Udumbara branch and a sacrifice is offered in the centre on an elevated spot.

*Some preliminaries of the building-operations.*

Then with a śamī or udumbara branch, he sprinkles the ground with water going round it so that his right side is turned towards it, reciting the 'śaṁtātīya' hymns. This is done three times, the water being poured without interruption with appropriate mantras.

According to Āp. the surface is then elevated and swept with a broom of Palāśa or Śamī wood in the south-western direction thirce. It is at this stage (according H.) that he puts on a new garment, touches water, takes a shovel with a formula and draws lines thrice from the left to the right, round the places where the pits for the posts shall be dug, with the formula (Taitt Saṁh. 1.3.11) "A line has been drawn", etc. and then digs the pits for the posts according to measurement and casts the earth dug out of those pits towards the inside of the building-ground. The way in which these pits for the posts are dug and the posts are erected and the ritual accompanying, are variously described in the different Gṛihya-Sūtras. According to S. water-gruel (or an oblation: P) is poured into the dug-up pits and then an Udumbara branch besmeared with ghee is put into the pit for the right door-post with a verse and with another, into the pits for the left door-post and in the same way, at the two (pits) to

*Digging the pits for the posts; erection of the posts and the putting up of the beams and roof etc.*

the south, to the west and to the north. Then with appropriate verses invoking plenty, the chief posts in the east and other posts are erected and touched. The posts appear to be two in each of the 4 directions, therefore 8 in all and these with the roof made of grass, the door-jambs and the pinnacle under which an anointed stone is buried, appear to be the prominent parts of the superstructure from the verses addressed to them. Ā. tells us, that into the pits in which the posts are to stand, he should put an avakā (*i. e.* the water-plant otherwise called Śīpāla) because thus the danger from fire is guarded against. When that plant is put into the pit for the middle post, eastward-pointed and northward-pointed Kuśa grass is spread on it and water (into which rice and barley have been thrown) is then sprinkled on the grass. Ā. tells us further something more about the construction; a bamboo-staff (which appears to the beam) is put upon the middle post (Āp. mentions the ridge-pole placed on the posts) and then the single rooms of the house should be constructed in the interestices between the bamboo-staffs (which were used, it seems for beams and posts) P. mentions 4 posts and the walls and their junctures : eastern, western etc. with the posts. According to H. also, there are the northern and southern door-posts and the two chief posts (*i. e.* the eastern and western, it appears). G. says that he who is desirous of fame or strength should build his house with its main door to the east. The door should be to the north if one is desirous of children or cattle; and to the south if one desires all these things but it should not be to the west. The back-door should not face the

*The position of the main door.*

chief house-door. This chief house-door should not face the door of another house, and should be so constructed that the householder should not be seen by unholy persons while performing religious acts or while dining in his house and passers-by should not be able to see the valuables in the house. The frequent reference to the 'Threshold' indicates strong door-frames. That a nursery, a bed room and a privy, were parts of the house, appears from the description of the places where the daily Bali oblations were offered. A drawing-room, provision-room and resting-place or retiring room were parts of the house. A span and an arrow were units of measurement.

*Putting up of the water-barrel.*

The putting up of the water-barrel may be taken as part of the house-construction though Pāraskara mentions it after the Vāstuśamana-a ceremony following after the completion of the house. A pit like the one for a sacrificial post is dug to the north-east of the house or just south of the spot in the north-east of the house, where a fire produced from a burning piece of śami or Palāśa wood and carried in a dish is placed after the house-building is finished. Kuśa grass, fried grains, fruits of the soap-tree and other auspicious things (such as rice and barley-grains) are then strewn into it and then the water-barrel is established in it (Ā). Then with appropriate verses four potfuls of water are poured into it. Then according to Āp. the ceremonies from the putting of the wood on the fire down to the Ājya-bhāga oblations are performed; four oblations are offered and then he enters upon the per-

formance of the 'jaya' and other oblations. Then having performed the rites down to the sprinkling of water round the fire, he should sprinkle water with a water-pot round the fire, or the resting-place on the inside with a Yajus verse, three times from left to right and then Brāhmaṇas are fed with cakes, flour and boiled rice. In the S. G. S. the water-pot is directed to be placed on fresh eastward-pointed grass; in Ā. on four stones on which Dūrvā grass has been spread. According to Ā. the appeasing of the water-barrel is done as follows:-Gold is put into water into which rice and barley have been thrown already and with that water, he sprinkles it three times going round it with his right side turned towards it repeating the śāṁtātīya hymn and this is done three times pouring out water without interruption.

*The Vāstu-śānti ceremony.*

When the house has been built in conformity with his plans, the posts etc. are approached and touched with mantras invoking them to grant prosperity. Before formally entering and occupying it, a ceremony known as Vāstuśāmana or (appeasement of the site) is to be performed. P. gives greater details than other Gṛihya-sūtras but Ā. alone states that this ceremony is performed under the constellation Anurādhā. According to P. the fire is established inside (the house) and the Brahman is made to sit down towards the south; a water-pot is placed to the north; a mess of sacrificial food is cooked and then he goes out and standing near the door addresses the Brahman, "Brahman, I enter (the house)!" When he has given his formal consent he enters the house with the formula" To Right, I advance; to

luck I advance ?" Then he prepares Ājya and sacrifices Ājya-oblations with appropriate Mantras; he sacrifices other oblations with verses invoking Vāstoshpati (the presiding deity of the house) for protection, prosperity friendship and removal of evil and all kinds of fear. The offerings of the mess of cooked-food with mantras, invoking Agni, Indra, Bṛihaspati, the Viśvedevas, Saraswatī, Vājī, the divine hosts of serpents, Himavat, Vasus, Rudras, the creator, the Viśvakarman, the herbs and trees and other deities, then take place. After he has partaken (of the sacrificial food), the house-holder should put into a brass vessel, the different things, which he has brought together viz-Udumbara leaves with strong liquor, green grass, cow-dung, curds, honey, ghee, kuśa grass and barley and should cause the seats and shrines for the images of the gods to be besprinkled. Then the walls and the posts are touched at the eastern, southern, western and northern junctures. He then goes out of the house and worships the quarters of the horizon invoking Day, Night, Prāṇa and the moon for protection.

When the finishing touches are given to the house he enters it with a formula meaning "Law is the chief post, fortune the pinnacle, day and night are the two door-boards ! Hither are called the whole host (of relatives); the friends whose coming is good". Then follows the feeding of the Brāhmaṇas. S. G. S. gives different texts accompanying the oblations in the sacrifice to Vāstoshpati and states that the house-holder enters the house taking with him, his eldest son and his wife carrying grain. This expiation-ritual is to be repeated every year or every season according to H.

Only the Gobhila and Khadira G. S. prescribe an animal sacrifice in connection with the Vāsu-śamana ceremony. Thus according to G. after putting wood on the fire in the middle of the house, a black cow or a white goat and milk-rice are sacrificed (or only milk-rice). The fat of the animal, Ājya, its flesh and milk-rice are mixed together and then eight portions of the mixture are taken up and then with these, 8 oblations are sacrificed, to the accompaniment of 8 verses including one addressed to Vāstoshpati. After this he should offer ten Balis in the different directions of the horizon from left to right and in the intermediate points in due order, with formulas like "Adoration to Indra-Vāyu, Yama, the Fathers, Varuṇa, Soma etc." This whole ceremony according to G. is repeated every year or at the two sacrifices of the first-fruits.

*Leaving the house for a journey and returning to it after completing the journey.*

(S). When a person leaves his village on a journey, he mutters "Free from danger, may we be ! May the village entrust me to the care of the forest?" and looks at his house and says "Do ye both, Mitra and Varuṇa ! protect this house for me !" When he enters the village on his return at the end of his journey he should mutter "May the forest entrust me to the care of the village !" and should not enter without carrying something with him such as fuel, flowers etc. The words with which he addresses the house while approaching it and looking at it before actually entering it (as given

*Affection for the house : Home ! Sweet home !*

both in S. & H) are touching and show us how the house had become the rallying point and centre of material prosperity in the eyes of the house-holder. "House ! do not tremble, I come back to thee, rejoicing in my mind. That of which the traveller thinks, *that* in which dwells much joy, that I call the house"; "Here are invited cows, goats and sheep, and friends, the sweet companionship of friends. May our dwellings always be unharmed, with all our men !;" then he enters the house with the formula "To thee, I turn for the sake of safety and peace ! O blissful one ! O helpful one !" Similarly the love and respect that the house (symbolical of his family and social relations) inspired in the minds of the house-holder are seen from the instructions ( H.G.S. ) that he should avoid all quarrelling on the day on which he has arrived and should utter auspicious words and then accept water for washing the feet.

*A House defined*

That repairs and renovation or decoration of the house also were undertaken in connection with the house is seen from a reference to these operations in the Āśvayujī and Āgrahāyaṇī ceremonies. The renovation is described as "Giving a new coating to the walls, spreading out a new roof and levelling the floor on the full-moon of Mārgaśīrsha." (Ā). This practice survives even to this day in the annual white-wash and minor repairs about the time of the Dewali holidays. Similarly from the instructions about raising an enclosure in the

*Annual repairs.*

Anvashṭakya ceremony it appears that such enclosures could be improvised with ease. Similarly, in the Śūlagava description, the building of a hut is necessary which shows that such small huts could be raised without much ado. That the roof was made chiefly of grass is seen from the description of the operation of making an opening in the thatched roof of the hall in the treatment of epilepsy. A circular apartment is referred to in the Puṁsavana ceremony as necessary for it.

**SECTION B:** Public works: Ponds, Lakes, Gardens etc.

The Sāṅkhāyana G. S, by describing the consecration-ritual of ponds, wells, tanks and gardens clearly implies the existence of these *works of public utility* constructed however it appears, *by individuals* because the ritual described is the Gṛihya (or domestic) one.

*Ponds & Wells*:

In the bright fort-night, on an auspicious Tithi, the house-holder cooks barley-grains with milk, sacrifices oblations with two Ṛig-verses into the fire and then makes offerings to the horizon, beginning with the west (sacred to Varuṇa) from left to right. In the centre of the pond or well, he offers oblations with milk and then plunges into its waters. A cow and a pair of garments is the fee for the sacrifice which is completed by a feeding of the Brāhmaṇas.

*Gardens.*

For the consecration of a garden, the sacred fire is established in the garden and then he prepares a mess of cooked food, sacrifices with certain formulas and then recites over the garden another Ṛig-veda mantra. Bridges

*Bridges.* are mentioned in the same G.S. in connection with the anadhyāyas because interruption of study takes place on a bridge. In Gobhila, there is the direction that water for *Protected reservoirs.* sacred purposes was to be brought from a covered reservoir "अनुगुप्ता आप:" or one which was not used by unclean and low-caste persons.

SECTION C : Communications : transport.

That journeys were pretty frequent is seen from the provision made for the offering of the Vaiśvadeva etc, which could be offered by the wife of a house-holder when he is away on a journey. A *Journeys.* student is referred to, as setting out on a journey after receiving the blessings of the teacher. The waters of a river or stream often have to be crossed in the course of a journey and a Snātaka crossing them has to offer a sacrifice with the oblations of water. If danger is apprehended, then according to S. the hymn to Vasishṭha is to be murmured so that, it might serve as 'a boat'. Ā. G. S. mentions a path, a cross-road, a river to be swum through or crossed in a ship, a forest, a mountain, a cemetery, a cow stable, and a boundary-tree as likely to be met with, in the course of the journey and to be appeased with appropriate prayers. Similarly among the evil omens on a journey are mentioned, thunder, the wind blowing his skirt on himself, a howling jackal and a shrieking bird. If in the course of a journey something is given to him

(*e. g.* rice or gruel) it is to be accepted with proper mantras, which shows journeys were long enough.

*Roads & ways.*

To turn now to the interesting question of the facilities for a journey or inter-communication, the roads call first for inquiry. As already seen above, Chatushpathas (or squares where four roads meet) are often referred to and mantras are to be muttered while crossing them. Cross-ways are also mentioned and cemeteries, big trees etc. lie along side of these paths and when they are met in the course of a journey appeasing verses are to be muttered. Wildernesses belonging to a village are referred to as to be crossed on the way. Rathyā or a high road is referred to as requiring Āchamana after being crossed.

*The means of travel.*

Next comes the inquiry about the means of travel: the conveyances etc. A Ratha or a chariot which appears to mean a decent light carriage (and not the unwieldy structure with which the word "Ratha" is at present associated in the popular mind) was the vehicle and horses, bulls and even *cows* (rarely even an elephant) were used for draught; only the observer of a Vrata was forbidden to yoke *cows* to a chariot. In Ā.P. and Āp., there are chapters devoted to the description of the act of mounting a chariot and the recitation of accompanying Mantras which shows that the chariot was a popular vehicle. According to P. he gives the order "Join the horses to it" and when they have been yoked, he goes to the chariot, saying "This is the Virāj" and touches the two wheels, the right and the left, one after

another with words like "The Rathantara, art thou" etc. and then the pole. He then touches the interior of the chariot with his hand (saying) "the two Aṅkas, the two Nyaṅkas, which are on both sides of the chariot! prosper us!" (It is doubtful what 'Aṅka' and 'Nyaṅka' mean. May they not mean the naves in which the axle rests which are referred to as touched before mounting in Ā. G. S.?) All the articles of wood on the chariot and every part of it is then touched. According to Ā. the chariot is mounted with the right foot first and then the reins are touched or if the horses have no reins they are touched with a staff (Does this mean that the chariots were so constructed that the horses could be managed with the reins or without them by merely twisting their tails?); and when the horses are in motion, a verse is murmured. If it is a new chariot, let him first drive it round a famous tree or a pool whose waters never dry up. If he is driving in a chariot towards images of gods, let him descend (from the chariot) long before he has reached them; if towards Brāhmaṇas, *just before* reaching them; if towards cows, when in the midst of them; if towards elders after reaching them. When he has reached his destination he should drive just a little beyond it and then should murmur "Here is rest, rest here" (Vāj. Saṁh. VIII, 57). Neither a woman nor a vedic student should ride a chariot. If the chariot is weak, if the horses run away with the chariot or do harm to him, the Aśvins should be invoked for safety and the earth or the chariot-post should be touched. When the journey is over and the horses have been unyoked, grass and water should be given to them. Āp.23,16-18 describe the riding of horses and elephants

for purposes of travel and provide for the emergency of harm done to the rider by the beast.

Pāraskara G. S. gives us an idea of the various beasts ridden when he gives mantras accompanying the touching or mounting of them. He thus mentions an elephant, a horse, a camel, or an ass.

As mentioned in the paragraph on journeys, rivers often intercepted the path of the journey. We find in S. a detailed description of the bride's journey to her husband's house. A river was crossed in such a case even with the harnessed chariot if that is possibe, and the bride was instructed not to look out at deep and dangerous places. But ships and boats were used, if the river was too big to be crossed in a chariot. In the description of the chaitya sacrifice in Ā. we are told that a navigible river is to be crossed with something like a raft. That ships plied on rivers (and seas) for traffic or commerce is plain also from the prohibition on ascending a ship for the observer of the Śākvara vrata except when his life was in danger.

*Ships and boats.*

# Chapter XV.

## Health, Hygiene and Sanitation.

### PART 1. RV. PERIOD.

The physician's skill is constantly referred to and miraculous cures are ascribed to the Aśvins-the great healers of diseases and experts in the surgical art. Consumption was a particularly dreaded disease and there are two hymns in which there are prayers "to ward it off limb by limb'. The Rv.IX,1:2 speaks[1] of a leech wanting to cure a fracture. The entire hymn X,97 is devoted to the praise of Oshadhis or plants with an emphasis on their curative powers; so herbs and plants played an important part in the 'materia medica' of this period. Prayers for long life are of course frequent.

### PART. 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS

The AV. mentions numerous diseases and charms and spells against them and the demon supposed to cause them. Takman (fever) is a common ailment; consumption, scrofula, dysentery, boils, swellings, convulsions, ulcers, rheumatism, headache, jaundice, cramps, eye-diseases, senility, fractures and wounds, bites of snakes and other harmful insects; poison in general, lunacy and other ailments; all these are sought to be cured by the use of appropriate herbs accompanied by the sprinkling of water impregnated with charms and spells e.g. a dark—coloured plant is supposed to cure leprosy and stamp out its grey spots. The use of sand-bags[2] to stop bleed-

1. Macd. H.S.L. p. 128 2. C.H.I.

ing is interesting. The dissection of victims at the sacrifices assisted indirectly the knowledge of anatomy. The Śānkhāyana Br.VI, makes a pertinent remark "Ṛtusandhishu Vyādhirjāyate "(Śickness is particularly prevalent at the junction of the seasons") a very correct observation indeed ?

## PART 3. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION A: Diseases, their prevention and cure.

As pointed out in the chapter on "Outlook on life" long life was intensely longed for and ritual magic competed with medicine and the rules of hygiene to ensure it. Thus the Kh.G.S. lays down that one desirous of long life should sacrifice a hundred pegs of Khadira wood as described in chapter VI. Accidental death and fear from serious diseases were sought to be averted in the same manner. Ā. prescribes the offering of oblations of boiled rice-grains with the hymn (RV,X,161) for a person that is ill or suffering from consumption. For a bite by a venomous animal, the victim should be sprinkled with water with an appropriate verse. Epilepsy (apasmāra or Kumāra ) was a much-dreaded disease and as the name Śvagraha indicates, was supposed to be an attack of the dog-demon to which boys were particularly liable. When a boy is attacked the father (or the performer of the atonement ceremony) practices austerities like fasting etc.; puts the sacrificial cord over the left shoulder, sips water and

*Ritual-as prevention and cure.*

*Long life.*

*Epilepsy.*

fetches water in an unused cup to pour it over the boy. The boy is covered with a net or an upper garment. He then causes a gong to be beaten or a bell to be rung and then takes the boy into the gambling-hall by another way than the door (i.e. through an opening made in the thatched roof of the hall, H.G.S.) In the middle of the hall (i,e. at the place on which they gamble) the earth is raised and besprinkled with water. Then he casts the dice, scattering them on all sides, makes a heap of them spreads them out and lays the boy on his back on the dice and besprinkles him with his joined hands with curds and salt while a gong is beaten to the south with the following mantras (P) which have a peculiar interest "Kurkura, who holds fast childran ! Chet ! Chet ! Śunaka (doggy) ! set him free ! It is true that the gods have given a boon to thee. Hast thou chosen even this boy ? Chat ! Doggy ! Set him free ?" (This should be done three times in the day (according to H) morning, noon and afternoon when the attack is on and also when he is normal. He then touches the boy with the words "He does not suffer;' he does not cry, he is not stiff; not sick when we speak to him and when we touch him."

*Symptoms of Epilepsy*

The Āp. G.S. speaks of a disease called Śaṅkha from which boys suffer and in which the person attacked utters cries resembling the sound of a conch (or Śaṅkha) ! The method of cure is as follows : The father practices austersties like fasting, recites a verse and pours water on the head of the

*The Śaṅkha disease.*

boy with a water-pot repeating another verse, in the morning, noon and at night. The expression "Daśamāsyāya sūtave" refers to ten months (lunar) of pregnancy which comes very near to a period of 280 days (after which delivery is expected at any time according to modern medical science). There is a rite called the Kshipra-janana to secure a quick and safe deliverance (for description see chapter VI). The Puṁsavana ceremony (vide the same chapter) is rather hard to interpret whether as a medical prescription or ritual magic. That miscarriages and ailments endangering the health of the pregnant woman were known occurrences is clear from the Anvālobhana rite (described in chapter VI).

*The pregnancy period.*

Head-ache appears to have been as common then as it is now (when various brands of aspirins flood the market). The cure for it is described thus in P. A person moistens his hands and passes them over the eye-brows of the unfortunate sufferer with the verse "From the eyes, the ears, the whiskers, the chin, and from the fore-head, I drive away this disease of the head". The verse gives us an idea of the parts of the head attacked by head-ache. If only one side of the head aches, another verse is recited and then the patient was bound to get better. That there were many centenarians is clear from the description of the ceremony of Udakadāna ( water-libations) for deceased persons. After the burning of the dead body, permission is taken from a Samānodaka

*Minor ailments and some methods of cure*

of the deceased to offer libations and he responds with the words. "Do so now and never again" *if the deceased was less than a hundred years old.*" Fasts are so often recommended in the ritual code that their beneficial effects on health appear to have been understood. The Sīmantonnayana ceremony is intended for the preservation and nourishment of pregnancy. Soshyantī-homa is offered for the woman in labour while the child is appearing. Āp. prescribes the following rite to cure a woman who is affected with consumption or is otherwise sick. The husband who has to observe chastity, rubs her limbs with young lotus-leaves (which are still rolled up) and with lotus-roots with appropriate formulas, limb by limb and throws away the leaves and roots towards the west. For success in the generation of children, the husband bathes the wife with the urine of a red-brown cow. This is of course ritual magic rather then medicine. Thus for the few ailments and diseases that are mentioned in the Gṛihya-sūtras the prescription is *ritualistic* rather than chemical or *medical* and this is to be expected as they are ritual text-books and will hardly mention anything without some ritual context or the other. This does not rule out the possibility of medical prescriptions used side by side though they are not mentioned.

## SECTION B: Hygiene and Sanitation.

In the chapter on Manners and Customs it has been pointed out how cleanliness was constantly insisted upon and in fact the ritual text-books are never tired of recommending a bath or washing of the feet or sipping of water at the commencement of every rite. We shall now put together a few notices of similar hygienic rules. After

delivery the mother was to take a bath with the infant on the 12th day. A Snātaka takes his bath with clothes on (सचैलस्नान), the idea being to see that the garments were washed every day and a naked bath avoided. Purity and cleanliness were insisted on to such an extent that the sipping of water was recommended after sleeping, sneezing, eating, drinking, changing garments, walking on a high road and visiting a cemetery. As people lived mostly in the villages, the luxury of an open-air life was at their very doors. The G. S. drop now and then many valuable sanitation hints. The mixture of pounded roots of Kachāṭani macha-kachāṭani. kośātaki, the egg-plant and the indigo-plant is used as noted before for smearing the confinement-room with. Cemeteries seem to be located far away from the village almost in the jungles. Execution-places were also far off. A Snātaka is not to eject phlegm in the neighbourhood of water. In the ceremony of Pratyavarohaṇa (sleeping on the ground instead of on a high couch resorted to owing to the fear of serpents), the floor is to be swept with a Palāśa branch and sprinkled with water before the layer of straw is laid on it as a bed. Wiping of the surface, smearing it with cow-dung and besprinkling it with water, appear to be the standard methods of cleansing the floor, or the surface of a piece of ground. A Snātaka was to ease himself on ground covered with grass or the like (but never on a ploughed field or uncovered and bare ground), standing or sitting and wipe off with wood that has fallen off by itself. That there were places marked out for the accumulation of waste corresponding to the modern dust-bins is clear from the reference to 'Heaps of sweepings' near a house, where a Bali was to be offered.

# Chapter XVI.

## Astronomy & Astrology.

### PART I ṚV PERIOD

Mr. Tilak in his Orion, has developed an elaborate theory regarding the state of astronomical knowledge and its special relation to the religious life of the Indo-aryans in the very dawn of history, as reflected in Vedic literature from the hyms of the RV. down to the Sūtra literature. Though the theory has found only one supporter among Orientalists *viz.* Jacobi, it is interesting and thought-provoking enough to be summarised here in its broad and bare out-lines, (though we may not agree with it), in so far only as it relates to evidence, however debatable, of astronomical knowlege in the ṚV.

*The Orion : A summary.*

Several ṚV. hymns presuppose a considerable development of the sacrificial ceremonies which it would be impossible to regulate without an accurate knowledge of months, seasons and the year. The primitive calender was in fact coevel with the sacrificial system. "The sattras which lasted for one year were nothing but an imitation of the sun's yearly course. They were divided into two distinct parts, each consisting of six months of 30 days each; in the midst of both was the *vishuvan i.e.* equator or central day, cutting the whole sattra into two halves"[1]. Offerings were made every morning and evening

1 Dr. Haug quoted in the Orion.

on every full-and new-moon and at the commencements of every season and ayana and the course of sacrifices ended with the year. The identification of Saṁvatsara with Yajña in many Brāhmaṇa passages and the etymology of the word "Ṛitvij" ( Ṛitu-yaj-season-sacrificer ) point in the same direction. The meaning of Saṁvatsara (a period where the seasons dwell from 'Vas' to dwell ) shows that the year was equivalent to a complete cycle of seasons. The year was thus solar but at the same time sidereal and not tropical as the change in the seasons caused by the precession of the equinoxes is too minute to be noticed, until after the lapse of hundreds of years and as no early work mentions the motion of the equinoxes. The month, was, however, determined by the moon as the names for the month and the moon coincide in most of the Indo-European languages. The adjustment of the solar year determined by the seasons with the lunar year consisting of 12 lunar months was therefore necessary and seems to have been made either by the insertion of the intercalary month every 2 or 3 years (Cf. ṚV.1,25, 8) or by the addition of 12 (intercalary) nights at the end of every lunar year (Cf. ṚV. IV.33,7 where we are told that the Ribhus–the genii of the seasons–slackened their course and enjoyed the hospitality of the sun after toiling for a whole year; cf also AV.IV.11,11). The latter probably was the older device, the memory of which appears to be preserved in the Dvādaśāha or 12 days of preparation prescribed before the commencement of the yearly sacrifice. Now the year as well as 'Uttarāyaṇa, in the earlier

*Vernal equinox-the older year—beginning*

sense *of 'the passage of the sun into the northern hemisphere'*, in the earliest times, must have commenced with the vernal equinox and not with the winter solstice as in the later Śrauta S. and Vedāṅga-jyotisha for the following reasons:- (1). The Vishuvan or equator-day must have been the central day of the annual sattra which was a close imitation of the year as seen above; this does not fit in with the winter solstice as the commencement or the year (2) ṚV. I.72.7, and X,2,7, mention Devayāna and Pitṛiyaṇa as known to Agni and X,98,11 says that Agni knows the Devayāna by the seasons. Now Śata-patha Br. (II. 1.3.1-3) tells us that Devayāna comprised the 3 seasons: Vasanta, Grīshma and Varshā and Bṛihad. Ā. and Chhā. Up. equate Devayāna to 'the six months when the sun is towards the north.' Now as in neither hemisphere, the winter solstice marks the beginning of the spring, it follows that in the oldest calendar, the Devayāna, commencing with the spring began with the "Vernal equinox"—the starting point of the "Uttarāyaṇa *in the earlier sense.* When later the year-beginning was shifted to the Winter-solstice (a change completed at least before the Taittirīya-Saṁhitā), the system of a double year-beginning was started, the Vernal equinox being retained as the starting point for the purpose of the Nakshatra-sacrifices and Uttarāyaṇa got the sense of "*the turning* of the Sun towards the North *from the Southern-most point.* In chapter IV of the Orion various arguments (with which we are not concerned here) are put forward to show that the earliest period of Vedic

antiquity extended from the Vernal equinox in Aditi or Punarvasu, to the time when it receded to Mṛigaśiras or Orion.

*Specific evidence of Astronomical knowledge in ṚV.*

ṚV. 85 mentions two Nakshatras: Arjuna and Agha and generally speaks of the Nakshatras and the motions of the Sun and the Moon as causing the seasons. 1,164,48 refers to the number of days contained in the year (and perhaps to the Ayanas according to Yāska). RV. 24,8 refers to a broad path constructed by Varuṇa for the sun which probably refers to the zodical belt. This same is the path of Ṛita (1,41,4) where the Ādityas are said to be placed and wherein Saramā discovered the cows of Indra (V.45,7-8) and which the luminaries never transgressed. [Mr. Vaidya in H.V.L. points out that "Nabhas" and 'Rochana' are (besides 'Nakshatra') words meaning 'Stars' the last word being reserved for 'Lunar mansions'. Dr. Keith says that Nakshatras were borrowed from some other nation later and meant in the ṚV. only a 'Star' and later also meant lunar mansions and were not brought into connection with the Sun.] ṚV. V, 40, refers to an eclipse observed by the sage Atri—a total solar eclise and not to an obscuration of the Sun by clouds. If the Nakshatras were observed and carefully watched, planets like Venus, Jupiter and Saturn which out-shine many of the Nakshatras in brilliance, must have been known! The mentions of five bulls in RV. 1,105,10 may not be regarded as explicit enough to denote the five planets, but there is the mention of Śukra and Manthin together in RV. III,32,2 and IX,46,4. Now the commen-

tators take those to mean "two sacrificial vessels so called" but the yearly sacrifice, being nothing but a symbolical representation of the Sun's yearly course, sacrificial vessels themselves have been named after the heavenly bodies and deities known at the time. Again X, 123-a hymn dedicated to Vena-is to be employed at the sacrifice when the priest takes up the vessel śukra. This circumstance as well as expressions like "Son of the Sun" "On the top of Ṛita (Zodiacal belt)" "Comes out of the ocean like a wave" etc. referring to Vena make it probable that we have in "Vena" the Āryan original of "Venus". This word in Latin is not to be traced to any Latin root and the Greek word Kupris (Latin Cypris) for Venus can be tracted to "Śukra" by well-known phonetic laws: So the planet Vena or Śukra seems to have been discovered and named before these races (Greeks, Romans and Indians) separated.

## PART. 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS

*Yuga.*

A division of time longer than the year is the 'Yuga' which, consisting as it did of five years, accommodated two intercalary months for an adjustment of solar and lunar years. Six seasons are mentioned generally, but at times five only, Vasanta coming first (Taitt. Br. I, 1.2-6). A passage from the Kaushītaki Br. 1,3 perhaps indicates that the rainy season commenced with the beginning of Śrāvaṇa, according to Mr. Vaidya [1].

*Seasons.*

1. H. V. L.

*Months.*

The old names of the months derived from the seasons viz. Madhu, Mādhava etc. are found in the other Saṁhitās and Taitt. Br. but the new names derived from 12 of the Nakshatras become current in other Brāhmaṇas e. g. in the Śatapatha, Kaushītaki and Pañcha-Viṁśa Brāhmaṇas. There is a discussion in the Taitt. Saṁh. as to whether the month should begin with the new or full-moon. Vaidya points out that at this time the week consisted of six days and was called a Shaḍaha.

*Weeks*

*Days Lunar and Solar.*

The Brāhmaṇas refer to "Tithis" or lunar days, but the Sāvana or a natural or civil day (literally-a sacrificial day ) seems to have been simultaneously in use as a very natural unit of time and Taitt. Saṁh. (VII.57.1) and Tāṇḍya Br. (V, 13) show that the Brahmavādins of old had to effect an adjustment of the Sāvana and lunar months by omitting a day from the former.

*Nakshatras.*

The Nakshatras are put down as 27 in the Taittirīya Saṁ. and 28 in the Maitrāyaṇī and Atharvaveda Saṁhitās. Perhaps this variation is due to the varying number of days in the lunar months. (But a different theory is put forward in the Orion P. 233 according to which, Abhijit though far away from the Zodiac found a place in the old list of the Nakshatras as marking the approach of the Vishuvan-day, the central day in the primitive sacrificial calander, but was dropped later when Vishuvan ceased to be the central day of the year owing

to the falling back of the seasons). Fanciful etymologies of the names of Nakshatras and their presiding deties are also stated in the texts of this period.

*The science of astronomy.*

The planets must have been known though a doubt is expressed as to this by some (Cambridge History of India Vol. 1). The science of astronomy or Nakshatra-Vidyā is mentioned as a subject of study in the Chhandogya Up. Among the Purusha-Medha victims in the White Yajurveda, there is a Nakshaatra-darśa and Gaṇaka which shows that the science was specially studied.

The Taitt-saṁ. T. Br. and other works mention the Kṛittikās as heading the list of the Nakshatras ( and this has been supposed by Tilak to indicate that the Vernal equinox which once commenced the year coincided with the Kṛittikās at the time and inferences about the date of the works have been drawn from this fact). Similarly the well-known passage in the Śatapatha "the Kṛittikās do not swerve from the east" is adduced as evidence of date but the theories have not commanded wide acceptance.

## PART. 3. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION A. Astronomical Observations and Terminology.

In the S. G. S. we are told that the most auspicious time for all kinds of sacrifices is the time when 'the sun shines on the tops of the great trees.' In the prescription of the time for fasting in connection with the new-

and full-moon sacrifices, there is an itteresting discussion in the Gobhila G. S. 1. 5 regarding the determination of the exact time of the full-moon and the new-moon. A close astronomical observation has shown the ancients that there are three ways of reckoning or determining the time of the full-moon viz. when the full-moon ( *i. e.* the sandhyā-Pauraṇamāsī ) rises at the meeting of the day and night or when it rises after sunset (*i. e.* the uttarā-paurṇamāsī ) or when it stands high in the sky at sunset (or the astamitoditā ). Rough definitions are also added Viz. Full-moon is the greatest distance between the sun and moon, new moon is their nearest approach. The new-moon day is specified as the day on which the moon is not seen sometimes; we are told that we may also, while the moon is still visible accept it as the day of the new moon for already then the moon has made his way.

That there was specialization in astronomical studies is indicated by the sūtra, 1, 5, 12 in Gobhila which sums up the above discussion by saying that this doctrine or science of astronomy should be ascertained from *those who know it*. S. makes one careful astronomical observation when it prescribes the time for making marks on cattle. "The new-moon that follows after the Phālguna full-moon falls under the Nakshatra Revatī. On this new-moon, marks should be made" etc. "Ā. 1.14, and all G. S. generally accept the tradition recorded in Jaimini that all Deva ceremonies should be performed only in the Uttarāyaṇa.

In an interpolated kāṇḍa of the S, G. S, twenty-eight Nakshatras are enumerated, Abhijit being added

to the usual twenty-seven and placed between the two Āshāḍhās and Śravaṇa in the order of enumeration. The name of Śatabhishak occurs for śatatārakā and Proshṭhapadās for Bhādrapadās. In the Pāraskara G. S. in the description of the Āgrahāyaṇa ceremony, the names of the five years constituting the quin-quennial Yuga are given separately as "Saṁvatsara, Parivatsara, Idāvatsara Idvatsara and Vatsara."

**SECTION B: Possible Reminiscent References to an older Calendar.**

The name given to the full-moon night of the month of Mārgaśirsha is Āgrahāyaṇī and the concluding ceremonies of the rites devoted to the serpents which are performed on this night are called the rites of the the Āgrahāyaṇī. This name is perhaps significant. The literal meaning is "coming at the beginning (Agra) of the year (Hāyana)". Similarly in the H. G. S. this night is called "Saṁvatsarasya Patnī "(the consort of the year) an epithet intelligible only on the supposition that it was one of the opening nights of the year. Are there reminiscences here of a system of reckoning according to which the month of Mārgaśirsha was the first month of the year? (Cf. 'मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहम्' of the Gīta X, 35). Besides of the three or four Ashṭakās (or eighth-days of the dark fortnights) which follow the full-moon night of the Mārgaśirsha month (Or Āgrahāyaṇī) when the Ashṭakā festivals are celeberated, the last only is called the 'Ekāshṭakā'. Now this Ekāshṭakā is called " Saṁvastsarasya Patnī-(consort) or Pratimā (Image)" in the H.G.S. as well as S. G. S. In another G. S. it is called "The disposer of the days" an epithet signifying its unique position as

closing the old and ushering in the new year. Similarly when in H. G. S. the Kṛittikās are placed at the head of the Nakshatras, there is a reminiscence of the mode of enumerating the Nakshatras current when the kṛittikās headed the list.

Now if we take up for consideration the Ekāshṭakā description, we find that the most widely accepted Ekāshṭakā among the G. S. in the list is the third Ashṭakā of the three Ashṭakās following the Āgrahāyaṇī or full moon night of Mārgaśirsha or the 8th day of the dark half of Māgha. (According to those few G. sūtras who hold that there are four Ashṭakās, the last Ashṭakā or Ekāshṭakā would be the 8th day of the dark half of Phālguna). The epithets applied are similar to those we meet with in the passages from the Taitt Saṁh. VII,4,8 and Taṅḍya Brah. V. 9 (quoted in Orion P. 44 & 45) and the same conclusions that have been deduced from these latter passages there (Orion Page 53) may be deduced from the Gṛihyasūtra passages which according to that view may be said to be reminiscent of the following ancient astronomical facts:-The full-moon night of the month of Māgha (or Phālguna) must have been the older year beginnings current once though the two different traditions prevalent in two different times were separated by a wide interval. A reminiscent corroboration of the above view is the mention in G. of Kṛittikās at the head of the Nakshatras [for fuller explanation of this point, see parts 1 and 2 of this chapter; which briefly is this : if the winter solstice commencing the year fell on the māgha full-moon then the vernal equiniox would be in the kṛittikās.

As regards the application of identical epithets (Saṁvatarasya Patnī) to the full-moon-night of Mārgaśīrsha we must, by parity of argument read in them a reference to Mārgaśīrsha as the first month of the year (?) and a confirmation of the Gītā statement quoted above. Now we cannot agree with Mr. Tilak when he says that all statements in which the first position is assigned to the month of the Mārgaśīrsha represent a certain period of Sanskrit literature when native scholars first misconceived the primary meaning of Āgrahāyaṇika (Orion P. 80). We rather think that *difference of custom or difference of seasons in different parts of India must* have been responsible for different year—beginnings in different provinces or periods of time. The Mārgaśīrsha tradition is particularly strong and is further supported by the A. G. S. when it prescribes a repainting and repairing of the house on the Margaśīrsha full-moon day in connection with the Pratyavarohaṇa ceremony which takes place on that day.

As has been seen in the chapter on 'Marriage' the G. S. mention a peculiar marriage custom viz-the bridegroom asks the bride, on their arrival at the new home, when the stars are visible to have a look at Dhruva the pole-star-the symbol of constancy: the ideal of conjugal life. Jacobi points out that this was possible only about 2780 B. C. when Alpha Draconis, a very bright star prominently visible to the naked eye, appeared in the vicinity of the Pole continuonssly for 500 years because the present pole star of the northern Hemisphere Viz. Alpha in the little Bear was far away from the Pole about 2000 years ago. This gives us vague results about

the dates of the Gṛihya sūtras any where from (1000 B.C. to 200 B.C.) but fixes in the opinion of Jacobi the lower limit of the ṚV. whose marriage hymn does not mention this custom.

SECTION C: Deities presiding over heavenly bodies and divisions of time.

That luminaries in the heavens like the Nakshatras should be deified is quite in keeping with the spirit of Vedic mythology. There is nothing surprising therefore if a presiding deity is mentioned in connection with every Nakshatra but when we closely analyse the nature of these various presiding deities *e. g.* Nirṛiti presiding over Mūla and Bṛihaspati over Pushya, we can easily understand the transition from astronomy and mythology combined to astrology and trace herein the basis of some astrological beliefs such as the inauspiciousness of the Mūla Nakshatra and the auspicious ness of Jupiter (Bṛihspati when close to the Pushya Nakshatra). This transitional stage is almost completed when we find (e.g. in S.G.S.) that days, nights, half months (lunar) and seasons are not units of time but also deities in the Vaiśvadeva along with the Nakshatras. This same deification of time-units is found in S.G.S. when we are told that a sacrifice of cooked food is offered in the Sūtikāgni to the Tithi of the child's birth and to the consteliation under which the child is born and also in P.G.S. when oblations are to be offered to Saṁvatsara, Parivatsara, Idvatsara, Idāvatsara and Vatsara, the five years of the quinquennial Yuga in the Āgrahāyaṇī description.

*Astrology.*

So implicit is the belief in the auspiciousness or otherwise of a particular point or period of time that a particular time is always prescribed for every sacrament and every step of the ritual. In general, the Uttarāyaṇa, the bright fornight, the masculine Nakshatras (viz. the Aśvayuk, Punarvasu, Pushya, Hasta, śatabhishak, Proshṭhapada, according to the commentators) and Hasta, Rohiṇi and the uttarās and time before noon were auspicious. The Anurādhā Nakshatra was prescribed for the Ashṭakā festival. The new moon-day was important for the monthly śrāddha and odd days of the dark fortnight for the Pitṛikarma or Śrāddha in general. For the Snāna, the choice may be among Rohiṇī, Mṛiga, Tishya, Uttarāphalguni, Hasta, Chitrā, and Viśākhā. The Pushya or Sravaṇa is prescribed for the Puṁsavana ceremony and Rohiṇī for ploughing.

These are only typical illustrations and show how carefully the Nakshatras and divisions of time were classified on the principle of auspiciousness or otherwise a principle explicable only on the hypothesis of a belief in Astrology. There is no mention of the Rāśi's (the 12 divisions of the ecliptic or signs of the zodiac) nor of the 'vāra's or names of week-days. Leaving aside the very controversial questions as to whether the Indians borrowed the Rāśis from the Greeks or vice versa and as to when they were invented or introduced, we may make one safe assertion *viz.* that astronomical and astrological calculation took into account only the Nakshatras. Marriage again, was no occasion for any elaborate consultations of the science of Astrology and a deep study of the horoscopes of the bride and the bride-groom as at present!

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# Chapter XVII

## Education.

### PART. I. THE ṚV. PERIOD.

The term Education [*educo*=I lead forth, I bring up a child–e, out and *duco*, I lead] has its counter-part in ancient Indian society in the term 'Upa–nayana, [The *drawing near* or *leading fourth* of a youth to himself to studentship by his teacher]. There is no direct reference to the rite of Initiation or Upanayana in the ṚV. The parallel Indo–Iranian rite surviving in the Navjot ceremony among the *P*arsis shows, however, that this rite did exist very probably among the Āryans from the earliest times. "All primitive people in fact possess some kind of a ceremony connected with the formal receiving of an adult youth as a regular member of the tribe; but the form in which this Saṁskāra is presupposed in the Brāhmaṇas and presented in the Gṛihya–Sūtras clearly shows the preponderence of priestly interest in the formulation of its details[1]". The frog–song, RV. VII. 103 gives us a glimpse of the educational system (if system, it can be called) of the RV. days. The fifth verse of this hymn runs thus : "When one of them repeats the speech of the other, *as the learner that of his teacher*, all that is in perfect harmony like a lesson which you, eloquent as you are, recite in the waters". Here is a picture

*Initiation.*

*A Vedic class.*

1. History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 2. p. 19.

of the earliest vedic school presented in the comparision of the collective croaking of the frogs, to the chorus (or babel!) of voices heard when a teacher is reciting the veda section by section (parvan), the pupils repeating his words. The first verse of the hymn tells us through a simile, that this concerted school-recitation went on at intervals in the course of the year, that in short, there were terms of the vedic school:–"The frogs having lain low (for the rest of) the year like Brāhmaṇas practising a vow, have uttered forth their voice inspired by Parjanya". The 'vow' is that of silence. The father himself might often be the teacher of the son imparting education at home but the above verse refers to a teacher surrounded by his pupils, the instruction being vocal. There is a reference to debates in RV. X, 71. It has now been recognised that even in this period the Soma sacrifice was elaborated and the division of sacrificial work among the several priests (the Hotṛi *etc.* and nearly seven assistants) already accomplished. The training then, of each class of priests in the particular Veda and ritual he was in charge of, presupposes the kind of vedic-school-recitation that the Frog-hymn illustrates. Similarly the assignment of certain occupations to particular varṇas and the tendency for such occupations to become hereditary brings us to another peculiar aspect of the system of education in Ancient India that survives to a certain extent even to-day *viz.–home education.* The son was a kind of apprentice to his father who was his tutor and picked up the particular art, industry, trade or other activity his father lived upon, by a course of practical

*Home-education.*

training at home. If however the father was a priest and specially proficient in his vedic lore, he would naturally attract a number of neighbouring stundents also around him and be the central figure of a picture like the one presented to us, in the Frog-hymn. The celebrated verse in the RV. III,62,10, the Gāyatrī. has prayers for 'a whetting of the intellect', (necessary for intellectual training).

## PART 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND THE BRĀHMAṆAS.

The process of imparting knowledge, particularly the knowledge of the sacred hymnology and ritual, of which we get just a rudimentary picture in the Frog-hymn of the ṚV, must have become more and more systematised as the sacrificial ritual and the literature connected with it increased and had to be preserved by oral transmission from teacher to pupil. Whether writing was introduced into India about 800 B. C, by traders coming by way of Mesapotamia (as Bühler thinks) or was as old as 8000 B. C. and indigenous as Dr. D. R. Bhandar kar thinks (proceedings of the first Oriental conference Vol.1), it played no important part in the educational system of Ancient India. There is a reference to Svādhyāya (daily lesson of vedic study) in the Yajurveda and a Brahmachārin collecting Samidhs (fuel-sticks) and bringing alms for the teacher is the Upamāna (standard of comparision) for the sun in the AV. (XI,5). The Brāhmaṇas, exegetical illustrative and explanatory in character as they are,

*Upanayana and the life of a Brahmachārin.*

are themselves *vast text books* explaining the sacrificial ritual. Long lists of teachers are mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas; and the Śatapatha Br. in its description of the Upanayana XI,3,5,1-7 and elsewhere, presupposes the Upanayana saṁskāra as represented to us in the Gṛihya-sūtras in all its important phases such as (1) the formal acceptance of the pupil by the teacher who has been requested by the pupil to do so (2) the entrusting of the pupil to the care of some deities (3) the vows and duties to be observed by him while residing at the teacher's house viz-putting fuel on the fire, sipping water and begging of alms (4) and his dress including the Ajina, the girdle etc. The yonug Āṅgirasa teaching his elders (XIII, 3, 23-24 of the Tāṇḍya Br), the story of Nābhānedishṭha and Bhāradvāja in the Ait. and Taitti. Brāhmaṇas and the stories of Śvetaketu Āruṇeya and Satyakāma Jābāla in the Chhandogya-up. and the well-known Anuśāsana passage in the Taitt Up. I.11.1-4-all give vivid details of the simple educational system of those days. The Taitt. Āraṇyaka 1,26 even mentions certain rules found in the G. S. such as "The pupil should not run while it is raining, nor urinate in water nor bathe naked" etc.

*Women's education.*

An important fact is that we find educated ladies like Maitreyī, Gārgī and Arundhatī who could carry on discussions on the most abstruse philosophical subjects. Now although it is not explicitly mentioned that the system of education included a provision for the teaching of women, these instances show that learned women were honoured. These women probably received their

training at home from their fathers and after marriage from their husbands.

*The subjects of study*

The Tāṇḍya Br. mentions Arithmetic, grammar and prosody, as subjects of study. Even language was carefully studied as the 'Northerners' are mentioned as experts in language and grammar in a Brāhmaṇa. The Chhāndogya Up. VII enumerates as subjects of study, the four vedas, Itihāsa, Purāṇa, Rāśi (Arithmetic), Vākovākya (logic), Kshatra-vidyā (art of war), astronomy etc.

*Moral instrncsion: Practical aspects of education*

There was then no system of *state education*. The Brahmin teachers taught students of the three higher castes at their house giving them free boarding and lodging, The pupils served the teacher and gave him Guru-dakshiṇā or fees at the end of the period of studentship. The Taitt. Up. passage 1,11,1-4 referred to above, gives a clear idea of the moral and intellecutual part of education. Truth-speaking, observance of Dharma, devotion to parents, and the Āchārya; hospitality and charity are inculcated as essential virtues upon the minds of the students. A point of interest is that the *Guru makes no extravagant claims of moral perfection for himself*. He is only human after all but the pupil is asked to hold up as an ideal only his meritorious deeds and not the others. The practical aspect of education is disclosed in the advice to the pupil to continue the line of progeny by marrying; not to swerve from the path of glory; to attend to 'Kuśala' or means of well-being in the wordly

*The famous "Satyam Vada" passage.*

sense; to make gifts not merely out of generosity but also for fear of public opinion (Bhiyā) as well as out of shame (hriyā). Kings like Janaka of course encouraged learning by holding literary tournaments and philosophical debates. The intervals of the great sacrifices were convenient for such debates and lovers of learning undertook long journeys to attend them. As Max Müller (History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature) has shown, there *existed vedic schools even before the sūtra-charanas viz.* those which originated with a difference in the Saṁhitā texts and (2) those with a difference in the Brāhmaṇa-texts. The Śākalas and Bāshkalas were the most ancient Śākhās (or schools) caused by differences in the RV. Saṁhitā texts. No similar Saṁhitā-śākhās for the Sāma-Veda or Yajurveda are met with. The Brāhmaṇa of the Vājasaneyins gave rise to fifteen charaṇas of the Vājasaneyins and among them to the Kāṇva and Mādhyandina charaṇas. The Brāhmaṇa-charaṇas existed previous to the composition of the sūtras and are quoted in the Sāma-veda-sūtras. The sūtras when they arose affected the constitution of these Vedic charaṇas and therefore it is not always possible to determine with certainty whether a charaṇa dates from the Brāhmaṇa or the Sūtra period.

*Literary debates.*

*Vedic schools or Charaṇas earlier than the sūtra-charaṇas. Max Müller's view.*

## PART 3. THE GṚIHYA—SŪTRAS

### SCCTION A: An account of the Initiation ceremony.

The time of the initiation is the eighth year or the

tenth (after *conception*) for a Brahmin, the eleventh year for a Kshatriya and the twelfth year for a Vaiśya (S).

*The proper age for the ceremony.*

[The counting of years not from birth but from conception occurs also in the Buddhist ordinances.] Several Grihya-texts admit both ways of counting the years. The time-limit for Initiation does not expire until the sixteenth year for a Brāhmaṇa, until the twenty-second for a Kshatriya and until the-twenty-fourth for a Vaiśya; after these ages, however they become patitasāvitrīkas (men who have lost their right of lerning the Sāvitrī) men for whom no sacrifiees were to be performed, with whom no intercourse could be kept and whom no one would teach. According to Olderberg[1], the number of years given for the Upanayana of persons of the three castes (Brāhmaṇas 8 to 16 Kshatriyas 11 to 22 and Vaiśyas 12 to 24) is evidently derived from the number of syllables of the three metres, Viz, the Gāyatrī the Trishṭubh, and the Jagatī. This, according to him, is a very curious example showing how in India fantastic speculations like those regarding the mystical qualities of the metres, were strong enough to influence the customs and institutions of real life. Pāraskara allows an option as regards the time which may be one that is considered auspicious by the different families. As regards Patita-sāvitrikas, he says "A person whose ancestors through three generations have been patita-sāvitrīkas is excluded from the sacrament of initiation and from being taught the veda. Of such persons those who desire to receive the sacrament may perform the sacrifice of

1. S. B. E. Vol. XXIX 159.

Vrātya-stoma and then study the veda, if they like".

The skin, the garment and the staff belonging to the different castes.

The youth to be initiated is adorned, his hair is arranged and he wears a new garment or an antelope-skin if he is a Brāhmaṇa; the skin a spotted deer, if a Kshatriya; a goat-skin or a cow-hide (S) if a Vaiśya or "a cow's hide may do for all if the prescribed one is not to be had, because to that belongs the first place among all upper garments" says Pāraskara.

*The skin or upper garment.*

If the youths to be initiated put on garments, they should put on dyed ones: the Brāhmaṇa-a reddish-yellow one; the Kshatriya a light-red one; and the Vaiśya a yellow one (Ā). G. prescribes a garment of linen or hempen cloth for a Brahmin; of cotton for a Kshatriya; of wool, for a Vaiśya.

*The lower garment.*

The staff of a Brahmin youth about to be initiated should be made of Palāśa or Bilva wood; that of a Vaiśya of Udumbara wood and that of a Kshatriya of Nyagrodha wood (S). Different G. S. prescribe different kinds of wood e.g. Ā. prescribes Udumbara for the Kshatriya. In fact, he adds "Or all sorts of staffs are to be used by youths of all castes". Different heights *i.e.* lengths of the

*The staff.*

staff are prescribed for the different castes. That of the Brāhmaṇa shall reach the tip of the nose; that of a Kshatriya the fore-head; that of a Vaiśya, the hair (The Dharma-sūtras, however assign a longer staff to the higher caste !). ĀP. has a curious direction "the staff of a Rājanya should be a branch of the Nyagrodha tree so that the down-ward-turned end of the branch forms the tip of the staff."

*The Initiation-rite principally according to H.*

The time prescribed for Initiation is spring for a Brahmin, summer for a Rājanya and autumn for a Vaiśya; the time of the increasing moon, under an auspicious Nakshatra, preferably under a constellation the name of which is masculine. On the day of the Initiation, the youth is given something to eat; his head is shaved, his hair are arranged, he is bathed and decked with ornaments. He is dressed in a (new) garment. Then the following objects, required (for the ceremony), are kept ready viz. a stone, a (new) garment (lower), a skin, a three-fold twisted girdle, etc. He makes preparations for laying the pegs round (the fire). Then in the Gṛihya-fire, a Darvī sacrifice is offered by both. The teacher sits to the west of the fire with his face turned towards the east; and to the south of the teacher, the boy wearing the sacrificial cord over his left shoulder, having sipped water sits down and touches (the teacher) and recites the Mantras with which he sacrifices. Agni is implored in Mantras to lead the boy to long life and the Jaya, Abhyātāna and Rāshṭra-bhṛit oblations are offered before the Svishṭakṛit one. Then

(*i.e.* after the ceremonies from the putting of wood on the fire to the Ājyabhāga oblations have been performed) the teacher causes the pupil to put a piece of Palāśa wood on the fire (ĀP) and then makes him tread with his right foot on a stone placed near the northerly junction of the pegs with the formula "Like a stone be firm". After the boy has taken off his old garments, the teacher makes him put on a new garment with appropriate prayers and recites over him a verse for long life. He then winds the girdle three times (or twice) from left to right round the boy so that it covers his navel. On the north side (*i.e.* the left-hand side) of the navel, he makes a three-fold knot (in the girdle) [there may be one knot or three or also five (S) ], and draws that to the south side of the navel. He then arranges for him the skin, as an outer or upper garment (S. only adds. "*He adjusts the sacrificial cord with an appropriate verse*"). H. does not mention the following ritual act here which is mentioned in a number of other G. S. The teacher now holds his joined hands which are filled with water by himself or by a Brahmin well-versed in the mantras above the joined hands of the pupil. ( Kh. & G ). The teacher then says to him "What is thy name ?" "I am so & so, Sir !" says the other; "Descending from the same ṛishis ?" asks the teacher addressing him by his two names (H). "Descending from the same Ṛishis, Sir" says the other; "Declare that thou art a student" says the teacher "I am a student" responds the other (S). There are minor varitations in these set questions and answers. *e.g.* according to P. "whose Brahmachārin art thou"? the teacher asks and the student says "yours", the teacher adding "Indra's pupil art thou". After this

the teacher sprinkles (or pours) thrice with joined hands, water on the joined hands of the student or the water is made to run out from his joined into those of the pupil.]

According to H. the giving in charge of the boy to the gods, with mantras differing with the caste of the boy, takes place almost at the beginning, after the girdle, skin etc. are put on. The teacher then touches with his left hand the left shoulder of the pupil and draws his right hand towards himself with the Vyāhṛitis, the Sāvitrī-verse and with the formula "By the impulse of the god Savitṛi, with the arms of the two Aśvins, with Pūshan's hands, I initiate thee"! He then seizes with his right hand (the boy's) right hand together with the thumb, with appropriate verses such as "By the impulse of the god Savitṛi, become Bṛihaspati's pupil; *sip water, put on fuel, do thy service, do not sleep in day-time.*" Then the teacher gradually moves his right hand down over (the boy's) right shoulder and touches the place of his heart with verses like, "Thy heart shall dwell in my heart. To me alone thou shalt adhere". He then touches the place of his navel with "Thou art the knot of all breath. Do not loosen thyself." Then reciting appropriate formulæ he seizes with his right hand the boy's right hand together with the thumb. Taking his mouth near to the boy's mouth, he murmurs "Intelligence may Indra, (the goddess Sarasvatī etc.) give thee." He then gives the boy in charge (to the gods) with various formulas. The teacher then makes him sit down to the west of the fire facing the north and makes him eat the remnants of the sacrificial food, the teacher looking on and reciting appropriate mantras.

After the boy has sipped water, the teacher causes him to touch water and recites over him a verse for long life and then makes him walk round the fire so as to keep his right side turned towards it and then causes him to say "I have come hither to be a student' etc. as above.

*Minor variations in other G.S.*

[ There are a few minor variations in the other G. S. e.g. the student is made to look at the sun while the teacher says "God Savitṛi, this is thy Brahmachārin" etc. (Ā:) S. describes the act of Upanayana itself as follows" And seizing the (student's) hands with (his own) hands holding his right hand upper-most, he murmurs "By the impulse of the God Savitṛi. I initiate thee !" He should initiate *those who aspire to be leaders of men* with the verse "Thee ! the Lord of the host" (RV.II.23.1); he should initiate warriors with another verse and sick persons with the Mahāvyāhṛitis.]

*The Sāvitri.*

The next most important ceremony is the teaching of the Sāvitrī. This is done *after one year or three nights or immediately after the Initiation* (S) Pāraskara adds the option of 'Six months, twenty-four days, twelve or six days" after the initiation. The Gāyatrī is to be recited to a Brahmin, a Trishṭubh to Kshatriya, and a Jagatī to a Vaiśya (S) or a Gāyatrī to persons of all castes (P) *provided it is a verse sacred to Savitṛi.* A bunch of grass with its points directed towards the north is placed to the west of the fire. The teacher sits on it, facing the east. The boy raises his joined hands towards the sun, clasps the feet of tacher and then sits down to the south of the teacher (H) or of the fire fac-

ing the east and looks at him and then addresses him "Recite, Sir ! the Sāvitrī" ! [(After this the teacher pronounces the word Om) (S)].(P.Kh,H.&Āp.). :- The teacher then recites the Sāvitrī to him Pāda by Pāda, hemistich by hemistich and finally the whole verse, reciting it together with the student. When repeating the Sāvitrī pāda by pāda, he pronounces the Vyāhṛitis singly at the beginning or at the end of the Pādas; in the same way the first and the second Vyāhṛiti at the beginning or at the end of the hemistich or the last Vyāhṛiti when he repeats the whole verse (ĀP). H. actually lays down the mode of recitation illustrating in a way the above directions:—"भूस्त रसवितु र्वरेण्यम् । भुवो भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । सुवर्धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥ भू र्भुवस्त त्सवितु र्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । सुवर्धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात ॥ and finally भू र्भुवःसुवस्तत् सवितुः......प्रचोदयात् ॥ Then the Mahāvyahṛitis are recited one by one and *om* at the end. After this, according to S. the teacher makes the student sip water three times with the Mantras" Waters are ye by name, of you being such, may I partake; receive me into your favour" and then hands over the staff with the five verses (RV. V.51,11-15) which is done (according to ĀP) after the student touches his upper lip and both his ears with appropriate mantras.

*The Daṇḍa-pradāna again.* !

Rāmachandra, the commentator of S. says that the staff which he had given to the pupil, silently before, is at this stage given again with the recitation of mantras. Olderberg (S.B.E.XXIXP.68) however differs and says "I do not think that this double handing over of the staff agrees with the real meaning of the text. Gobhila also (11.10) and Aśvalāyana

(1,22,1) prescribe the daṇḍapradāna after the repetition of the Sāvitrī without mentioning that the same had been done already before; Pāraskara II,2,11, speaks of the handing over of the staff before the recital of the Sāvitrī and does not state that it should be repeated afterwards. All these ceremonies: the teaching of the Sāvitrī as well as the Daṇḍapradāna, were considered as forming part of the Upanayana even though a longer or a shorter space of time (S. chapter V,1,3) might elapse between the first arrival of the student at the teacher's house and the performing of these rites. This follows from chapter II Sūtras 2-4 of S". In support of Olderberg's remark it may be added that the Khādira G. S, & ĀP. mention the handing over of the staff only once i. e, after the Sāvitrī teaching. The H. G.S. describes the next stage of the rite as follows:-The teacher then causes the student to put on fire seven pieces of fresh Palāśa wood (with unbroken tops, one span in length, which have been annointed with ghee), next two and then four pieces of wood, sprinkles water round the fire, worships deities like Agni, Vāyu and Āditya and then an optional gift is given to the teacher. Then the teacher makes him rise and gives him in charge to the Sun with the words "Sun! this is thy son! etc." and then worships the Sun. The teacher now gives him the staff (mentioned already) and hands him a bowl for begging. Then he says to him "Go out for alms"? Let the pupil beg of his mother first (or of a woman who will not refuse: S.) and next let him beg in other houses, of people who are kindly disposed towards him from. Let him approach for alms

*The next stages.*

six or twelve or an indefinite number of people. He brings the food to his Guru and announces it to him by saying "(These are) the alms". The teacher accepts it with the words "Good alms they are". With an appropriate verse, the teacher takes for himself the former garment of the student. When the food (with which the Brāhmaṇas shall be entertained) is ready, (the student) takes some portion of boiled rice, cakes and flour, mixes (these substances) with clarified butter and sacrifices with the formula "To Agni Svāhā !" He then offers a portion of the same kind of food on east-ward-pointed Darbha-grass to Vāstupati. After serving those three kinds of food to the Brāhmaṇas, and having caused them to say "auspicious day, Hail ! God luck !" he keeps through three days vows like eating no pungent or saline food etc. (described in another section). After the lapse of those three days, he serves in the same way three kinds of food to the Brāhmaṇas, securing their blessings and discharges himself of this vow. The same observances are kept afterwards also. Such are the main elements of the very important Upanayana ceremonial.

## SECTION B : Moral training.

*Moral development.*

That education in ancient India was dominated by one ideal *viz.* development of character ("सा विद्या या विमुक्तये") is seen from the numerous *vows* and *observances* imposed on the pupil (Brahmachārin) after the Upanayana which was a sort of entrance to a new spiritual life which entailed on him the most rigorous discipline for a definite period. He was to live as a religious

student in the house of his teacher. So our ancient Universities were residential and a more perfect Tutorial or Precptorial system was followed than is now possible in any modern University, as the pupils were under the observation of their Guru, *for all the* twentyfour hours! The vows and observances mentioned above are:–He eats no pungent or saline food and no vegetables but H. G. S. would relax this restriction after the first three days following immediately after the Upanayana. He sleeps on bare ground, does not drink out of an earthen vessel, does not sleep by day-time, does not eat honey or meat, brings (to his teacher) the food which he has received as alms and a pot of water, in the morning and in the evening, fetches a bundle of firewood every day and in the morning and evening or in the evening puts fuel on the fire. His fire-worship or service is as follows:—He establishes the fire in its proper place, wipes with his hands the ground round it, sprinkles water round it, bends his right knee and then puts on fuel, with proper mantras and then his daily Vedic recitation goes on. He always carries a staff, wears a girdle and has his hair tied in one knot or he ties the lock on the crown of the head only in a knot (if the rest of the hair are shaven). As an upper garment, he might wear the various skins mentioned before or a garment dyed with red Lodhra. He observes Brahmacharya or perfect celibacy. He could *not relax* these observances, whether the studentship lasted for 48, 24, or 12 years or even for a shorter period. P. adds that bathing for pleasure, sitting on high seats, falsehood and taking what is not

*The standing vows and observances.*

given to him, are forbidden to the student. The alms are announced to the teacher first and then eaten with his permission. *Vratas or vows are an integral part of his education* e.g. when a lesson is finished, standing and fasting for the rest of the day are necessary. Every day he performs the Sandhyā or twilight devotion in the forest. In the evening with a piece of wood *i.e.* a Samidh in his hand, seated, he performs it, observing silence, turning his face to the north-west *i.e,* to the region between the chief (west) point and the intermediate (north-western) point of the horizon until the stars appear, murmuring when the twilight has passed, the Mahavyāhṛitis, the Sāvitrī and the (specified) auspicious hymns. In the same way, it is performed in the morning, turning his face to the east, standing, until the disc of the sun appears, so that the veda-study goes on after the sun has arisen. In addition to the Nitya or obligatory vows, there were many special observances such as the śukriya vow in connection with the completion and inaguration of the study of the main part of the veda and the recitation of certain other portions of Vedic texts. The Śukriya vrata precedes the study of the main part of the Veda:-In the Uttarāyaṇa period and bright fortnight (excepting the fourteenth and eighth days), the teacher should abstain from eating flesh and sexual intercourse for one day and night and direct the student to the duties of holiness already described in the ceremony of the Initiation, the same being valid for the Śukriya rite. Those duties may be observed

*The 'Sandhyā' adoration.*

*The special observances.*

*The Śukriya vrata.*

for three, six or twelve days or one year or as long as the teacher thinks fit. The Anuvāchana or the study of the Veda can only begin after the performance of the Śukriya rite before which nothing but the Sāvitrī can be taught to him.

*The Śakvara, Vrātika and the Aupanishad vratas.*

The Śākvara, Vrātika and the Aupanishad-vratas precede the study of the different sections of the Āraṇyakas. These vratas are performed in the following manner. First of all, comes a rehearsal of the Upanayana ceremony (beginning with the smearing of the Sthaṇḍila with cow-dung and the drawing of the lines etc, with just such changes in the wording of the mantras, as are appropriate to the particular vrata to be undertaken). Then follows the Vrata proper and then the Uddīkshaṇika ceremony which chiefly consists in the teacher's ascertaining whether the student has duly fulfilled the duties involved in the Vrata. Then the teacher wraps up three times from the left to the right with a new garment the head (of the student) who is standing behind the fire, in front of the teacher, facing the east. He turns the skirt of the garment upwards so that it cannot slip down and asks him to suspend (for three days or one night) his standing duties such as putting on fuel etc. and fast in a forest or a god's place, keeping silence; the teacher also refrains from flesh and sexual intercourse during the time. After this, they go out of the village in a north-eastern direction, selecting a dwelling so situated as to enable them to avoid the sight of persons or things that form impediments to the study of the Veda, such as raw flesh, a Chāṇḍāla, a woman in menses or confinement,

blood, nails, maimed persons, cemeteries, tigers, or horns etc. The teacher sits down on a clean spot facing the east and when the sun has risen, he recites (in the way prescribed for Veda-study) the Āraṇyaka texts viz, the Mahānāmnī or Śākvarī verses (given in the fourth Āraṇyaka of the Aitareyins) to the student, who observes silence and wears a turban. All the sections that follow the Mahānāmnī, the pupil listens to, while the teacher recites them for him. Then the teacher gets gifts such as a turban. Gobhila G. S. says that the Śākvara vrata may be kept for twelve, nine, six or three years and adds among the observances:-using black clothes and food; standing during day-time and sitting at night; cheerfully facing rain, thunder and lightning; and crossing a river without a ship except when life is in danger but winds up with the remark that they are optional! Gobhila and Kh. G. S. belonging as they do to the Sāma-veda add the Godāna Vrata, Ādityavrata and the Jyeshṭha sāmavratas to the list. Oldenberg remarks (P. 69 Vol. XXX S. B. E.) "one thing peculiar to the followers of the Sāma-veda was that the ceremony of the Godāna or cutting of the beard, was put into connection with their system of vratas; the undergoing of the godānavrata enabled the student to study the Pūrvārchika of the Sāma-veda." Then he quotes the commentary on Gobhila III.1.28 which describes all these vratas, "The Upanayana vrata has been declared to refer to the study of Sāvitrī; the Godāna vrata, to the study of the collections of verses sacred to the gods Agni, Indra and Soma Pavamāna (this is the

*Other Vratas and Disciplines.*

Pūrvārchika of the Sāma-veda); the Vrātika vrata, to the study of the Āraṇyaka with the exclusion of the śukriya sections : the Āditya vrata refers to the study of the śukriya sections; the Aupanishad vrata, to the study of the Upanishad-Brāhmaṇa; the Jyeshṭhasāma vrata to the study of the Ājya-dohas." All these vratas last one year each. Sleeping on the ground and avoiding honey and flesh, sexual inter-course, shaving, luxurious bathing, combing the head, cleansing the teeth and feet in leisurely fashion, mounting a chariot yoked with cows and wearing shoes in a village-are the observances of the Godāna vrata. The Āditya-vrata which is not very common prescribes the wearing of one garment and bans the warding off of the sun's rays and descending into water. The standing duties in connection with the Jyeshṭha-sāma-vrata are desisting from the following acts:-intercourse with a śūdra woman, eating bird's flesh, living constantly on the same grain, in the same place and wearing one garment and eating or drinking from an earthen vessel. The staff, girdle or sacrificial cords, if broken are to be repaired with the same penance that is prescribed for the breaking of the wedding-chariot. That vedic recitation and study were as much a religious as an intellectual exercise is seen from the penance prescribed for any fault in the recitation viz-a fast for three days and recitation of the Sāvitrī. A tarpaṇa took place at the end of Vedic study. The division of Snātakas into three types (1). The Vidyāvrata snātaka-who has not only completed the study of the Veda but also duly observed the vows connected with it (2) the Vidyā-snātaka-who has completed the study of the veda without completing the vows and (3) the vrata-Snātaka who has

duly observed the vratas but not finished vedic study, shows that vows and observances were regarded as equally important with vedic study from the educational point of view. The vow of chastity was so strictly and rigidly enforced on a student that the penance for breaking it was (according to P) the sacrificing of an ass to Nirṛiti on a cross-road on the new-moon day. According to another view quoted by the P. G. S., the guilty student was to put on the skin of an ass with the tail up-turned and to go about for one year proclaiming his deed while begging alms! The Upanayana ceremony alone gave a person any status as such in religious matters *e.g.* the right to offer the Upākaraṇa and Utsarga sacrifices. The great purity and holiness of these rites in connection with Veda-study is seen from the prohibition on salt, pungent food and the offering of any despised sort of food in the fire in connection with them a prohibition which does not hold in the Bali and Kāmya-ceremonies.

## SECTION C: Intellectual training.

But education had an intellectual side also and it centred mostly round the preservation, by means of recitation, of the veda of the particular śākhā to which the student and teacher belonged or of all or as many Vedas as could be mastered by the student. That the concluding portions of the Brāhmaṇas *viz.* the Āraṇyakas and the Upanishads were also studied and a mystic significance attached to the study, has been noted in the preceding section.

The studentship lasts for forty-eight or twenty-four or twelve years or *until he has learnt the Veda* (H) or as

*The number of years set apart for study.*

Ā. explains, "for twelve years lasts the Brahmacharya for each veda or until he has learnt it." The exposition of vedic study or the manner of conducting vedic teaching is thus given by S:—Both (the teacher and the pupil) sit down to the north of the fire-the teacher with his face to the east, and the pupil with his to the west; the student then clasps the teacher's feet, sprinkles water, kneels down with his right knee on the roots of young kuśa shoots and grasps those kuśa shoots in their middle with his hands, keeping the right hand on top. The teacher then seizes them at their tops with his left hand and sprinkling them with water, makes the pupil repeat the following formal requests to himself one after another "Recite the Sāvitrī"; then "Recite the Gāyatrī" then 'the verse of Viśvāmitra, the Ṛishis, the deities, the metres, the śruti, Faith and Intellect "and himself says" I recite the Sāvitrī, etc. in response each time. In this way teacher recites each hymn with due reference to its Ṛishi, its deity and metre. If the ṛishis, deities and metres are not known, let Sāvitrī be regarded as the deity, Viśvāmitra as the Ṛishi and Gāyatrī as the metre of every hymn because according to Nārāyaṇa the commentator of S. *if the Gāyatrī has been* recited,-the essence of the whole Veda, a complete knowledge thereof may be said to have been produced. The limits of the daily lesson are set forth thus:—The pupil is to recite either the hymns belonging to each Ṛishi or each Anuvāka of the short hymns or Kshudra-sūktas(RV.

*The manner of conducting Vedic teaching.*

*The daily lesson.*

X, 129-191) or an Anuvāka or one verse in the beginning of each hymn. When the lesson is finished, he takes young kuśa shoots and sprinkles water on them as each hymn is completely recited. As Oldenberg remarks ( S. B. E. XXIX) this was an abridged method by which students who did not aspire to be vedic scholars and probably and chiefly students of the Kshatriya and Vaiśyā castes could fulfil their duty of learning the veda; a student who knew the first and last hymn of a Ṛishi or of an Anuvāka was, as would seem from these sūtras, by a sort of fiction considered as though he had known the whole portion belonging to that Ṛishi or the whole Anuvāka. The Kh. G. S. belonging to the Sāma Veda has its peculiar directions:-when the Veda is repeated to the student, let him repeat after each section of the text the beginnings of the Ṛichas and the Prastāvas (of the Sāmans) as a sort of index and then the Rahasyas are chanted. The H. G. S. (of the Black Yajurveda) lays down that at the beginning and end of the study of a Kāṇḍa (of the Black Yajurveda) he offers sacrifices and next an oblation to the Ṛishi of the Kāṇḍa. The syllabus of study

*The syllabus of study.*

then, comprised portions from the śruti and as well as Smṛiti (which latter term referred to all ancient orthodox nonrevealed works on grammar and the Kalpa-sūtras etc.) and out of the vast śruti literature especially the different portions of the Āraṇyakas such as the Mahānāmmī verses and the Upanishads as is clear from the description of the Śākvara, vrātika and the Aupanishad vratas. The definition of learning given by S. I, 2, 5):—"the three-fold (knowledge *viz*, that) which refers to the deities, that which refers to the Ātman and

which refers to the sacrifice (handed down) in the Mantras and in the Brāhmaṇas,-this is called learning" seems to classify the subject-matter of the Śruti. The Brāhmaṇas with their concluding portions the Upanishads, represent the knowledge referring to the sacrifice and to the Ātman, and the vedic hymns represent the knowledge referring to the deities. The fact that "Firmness, delight, success, thought, belief, insight and memory" are qualities which are so highly prized that they are sacrificed to, in the Upākarma ceremony along with Anumati, Sadasaspati, the metres and the sages, give us a complete picture of the ideal intellectual and moral development of the student. This double aspect of education as well as the reconition of the differences of mental calibre among the students are emphasized by the three types of Snātakas (1) the Vidyāvrata snātakas (2) Vidyā-snātakas (3) and Vrata-snātakas, mentioned in the preceding section. That intellectual development was highly prized is clear from the Medhājanana rite prescribed for the new-born child already described in chapter VI and also from the fact that Ā. prescribes it again at the Upanayana ceremony after the student has fulfilled the observances described already for 3 nights or more.

*The Medhājanana or 'Production of Intelligence' again* (Ā)

While the student sprinkles water thrice from the left to the right with a water-pot round a Palāśa (tree) with one root or round a kuśa bunch if there is no Palāśa, the teacher causes him to say "O, glorious one, as thou art the preserver of the treasure of sacrifice for the gods, thus may I become the preserver of the treasure of the Veda for men". Simi-

*Literary Debates.*

larly the rite prescribed for victory in debates *viz.* the Saṁvādābhijaya (described in chapter VI) shows that literary debates were very common, that there were special assembly-halls for such debates and that they used to be crowded. Memory was a specially valued faculty and P. G. S. lays down that each time a lesson of the veda is studied, a prayer is to be recited to prevent the forgetting of what the student has studied.

*The opening of the vedic terms.*

The vedic term commenced with the Upākaraṇa ceremony which was to be performed sometime during the bright fortnight of the month of Śrāvaṇa *when the herbs appear* or under the Hasta Nakshatra or on the full-moon day of Śrāvaṇa (H. G. Ā) or on the fifth (tithi) of that month [which will roughly fall under the Nahshatra Hasta if the full-moon day of Śrāvaṇa falls, as the name of the month implies under the Śrāvaṇa Nakshatra: which therefore is practically the same alternative that is mentioned above]. G. gives one more period *viz.*–"On the full-moon day of Praushṭha pada" Ā. calls the Upākaraṇa as *Vārshika i.e. belonging to the rainy season.* The Śravaṇa Nakshatra is evidently considered as particularly fit for this occasion perhaps because its name contains an allusion to *Śruti.* The Hasta Nakshatra is also selected perhaps because Savitṛi is the presiding deity over Hasta (Comp. s. I, 26 II and G. III, 13, 13 where the day under the Nakshatra Hasta is called the day sacred to Savitṛi).

The procedure is slightly different in the different

G. S. but the main elements appear to be (1) a sacrifice and reciting the sāvitrī as at the Upanayana (2) offering of oblations of fried barley and grains with curds and partaking of them (3) and recitation of the veda with the pupils either in entirety or of first verses only. So Gobhila and Kh, belonging to the Sāma-Veda lay down that the teacher sacrifices with the Vyāhṛitis (or sacrifices as at the Upanayana: Kh.); he then causes the student to recite the Sāvitrī with its sāman melody and then the Bārhaspatya sāman and then all recite the first verses of the Chhandas-book. Then they eat fried barley-grains and curds with appropriate verses and afterwards, when they have sipped water or on the following day in the morning, let the teacher repeat the Veda to his pupils (Kh.) or he should cause them to repeat the first verses and sing the first sāmans of the different Sections (G). The Gṛihya-sūtras of the RV: S and Ā describe the ceremony as follows:- Having sacrificed the two Ājya portions he should offer Ājya oblations to Savitṛi Sadasaspati, to the Ṛishis etc. and then sacrifice grains with curds to those deities and Agni Svishṭakṛit or oblations of flour of barley and grains mixed with curds and ghee, which are eaten by the teacher with his pupils after the recitation of the Veda. Then they sit down to the west of the fire, on Darbha grass · the tufts of which are directed towards the east and puts Darbha blades into a water-pot. Making a Brahmañjali, he next murmurs the Mahāvyāhṛitis and the Sāvitrī three times and then recites the auspicious hymns commencing from the begi-

*The ceremony of Upāarma.*

nning of the Veda. According to H. & Āp. belonging to the Black Yajurveda he puts wood on the fire, performs the rites down to the Vyāhṛiti oblations and sacrifices to the Ṛishis of the kāṇḍas or to the names of the kāṇḍas, to each of the four Vedas and to Sadasaspati; they next repeat the first three Anuvākās or the beginnings of all kāṇḍas and then are offered the Jaya and Abhyātāna oblations; then all the rites down to the Svishṭakṛit oblation are performed and then follows an interruption of Vedic study. According to Pāraskara (white Yajurveda) he sacrifices the Ājya portions, and then offers Ājya oblations to the deities suitable to the particular vedas he intends to study and besides, to Brahman, to the Metres, to Sadasaspati etc. Then the teacher sacrifices fried grains, three times with a verse repeated by the pupils after him. After each oblation, they should put on the fire, three pieces of udumbara wood, fresh branches with leaves anointed with ghee, reciting the Sāvitri and then eat the fried grains without chewing them and then the curds. The teacher next pronounces the word Om! and then repeats the Sāvitrī three times and the beginnings of the Adhyāyas to the students who are seated facing the west. They repeat the beginnings of the sections belonging to the different Ṛishis if they are Bahvṛichas; the Parvans if they are chhandogas and the Sūktas if they belong, to the Atharva-veda. This finishes the Upākarman, which according to S. IV, 5,15-16 ensures success to the Mantras of a Brahmin as well as vigour and soundness to the hymns.

After the Upākarman ceremony, the vedic study goes on for five months and a half or four months

and a half or six months and then follows the ceremony of Utsarga or closing of the 1st Vedic term which is performed according to S. on the first day of the bright fortnight of Māgha or on the middle Ashṭakā (*i. e.* the 8th day of the dark fortnight of Māgha) or in the month of Pausha under the Nakshatra Rohiṇī (P) or on the full-moon of Pausha which is considered as coinciding approximately, with the beginning of the Uttarāyaṇa. They (the teacher and his pupils) go to the North-east or in an easterly or northerly direction and in a place covered with herbs, they murmur the hymns sacred to the sun and throw clods of earth (on the ground) to the different quarters (of the horizon from the left to the right) (S). Then they go the brink of a stream, the level of water in which is higher than their secret parts (G), which is pleasant and has a pleasant bathing-place; and diving into it, perform three suppressions of the breath with the Agha-marshaṇa hymns. Holding purifiers (or Darbha-blades) in their hands they bathe with three verses, giving the Darbha blades to each other and pretending to try to take them from each other (H). They should next satiate by pouring out water, the metres, the Ṛishis, the teachers ancient and modern, the Gandharvas and the fathers (G & P). Then they arrange on a pure spot that is inclined towards the east, seats of eastward-pointed Darbha grass, so that they end in the north, for the divine Beings beginning with Brahman and ending with the Āṅgirasas. For the seven Ṛishis, seats of north-ward-pointed darbha grass ending in the east, are arranged towards the north, with

*The Utsarga ceremony.*

a seat for Arundhatī between Vasishṭha and Kaśyapa and another for Agastya towards the south in a place inclined towards the east, while they ( teacher and pupils ) wear their sacrificial cords below (*i. e.* round their loins). Then come seats for various teachers ending with those who teach only one veda as well as for some abstract deities such as, Jvara and Artha, for Savitṛi, and Sāvitrī, for each veda and Itihāsa and Purāṇa and Krishṇa Dvaipāyana. Towards the south, with their sacrificial cords suspended over their right shoulders, in a place inclined towards the south, they arrange seats of south-ward-pointed darbha grass so that they end in the west, for Vaiśampāyana, Ātreya, the author of the Padatext, Kauṇḍinya the author of the commentary, for the authors of the sūtras, for Satyāshāḍha, for handers down of the text, for the teachers, the Ṛishis, the hermits, the chaste ones etc. They also prepare (Seats) each for his own paternal and maternal ancestors and then offerings of water are made and then perfumes, flowers, incense and lamps, food and lastly water with fruits in it are offered to them. Having worshipped them next, having put wood on the fire, to the west of the spot on which he has performed the Tarpaṇa and having performed the rites down to the Vyāhriti oblations, they plant Dūrvā grass on the banks of the stream. They then stir up waves in the water and run a race in an easterly and northerly direction until they lose their breath and when they have returned from the whole ceremony to the village, they offer cakes, coarsely ground-grains, and boiled rice to the Brāhmaṇas. These same rites are repeated when they have finished the study of the whole Veda with the

exception of the planting of Dūrvā grass, the stirring up of the water and the race.

From the above description, it will be seen that the present Śrāvaṇī ceremony which combines the Utsarga and Upākaraṇa rites is somewhat different. In one G.S. (Gobhila) the Utsarga ceremony is called the second Upārkaraṇa (Pratyupākaraṇa) as concluding the first term but opening the second. The rule that after the Utsarga ceremony, one should study the Vedas during the bright fortnight and the Vedāṅgas in the dark fortnight found in Vasishṭha Dh. S. XIII 5-7 and Manu IV, 96 may explain the present practice. S. says that after the Utsarga ceremony the study of the hymns may be interrupted for six months and a half or for five months and a half (this appears to be the long vacation of the ancient Vedic University). But if they wish to recite them (nevertheless), let the recitations go on after a pause of one day and night. Now this almost year-long recitation of the Vedas was subject to numerous breaks or interruptions which we proceed to describe.

*Interruptions of study.*

The multiplicity of such interruptions which may be called in a restricted sense holidays, need not occasion any surprise as the ancients had to err on the safe side in guarding the correct and scientific method of recitation of the Vedas to the minutest part of it *viz.* the syllable or even the mātrā because the Veda-texts were not avilable in a written form in the beginning and even later were not to be reduced to writing. It was better that there was no recitation at all rather than that a slight fault should get repeated through mistake in the

transmission by word of mouth and later on become an integral part of the Veda itself.

*Breaks due to Upākaraṇa & Utsarga.*

At the time of the Upākaraṇa and the Utsarga ceremonies an interruption of Vedic study shall take place for three days and three nights. There is to be no cutting of the hair or nails for three nights after the Upākarman or until the Utsarga ceremony is performed (P). The latter alternative means that students during the (vedic) term grew their hair and nails.

*Breaks due to deaths or births etc.*

The break continues for twelve days if one of the chief Gurus dies; ten days after the death of a Sapiṇḍa; of a Guru who is no Sapiṇḍa and of unmarried female relations; three nights after the death of other teachers, of a relation who is no Sapiṇḍa, of married female relations, of a child without teeth or a still-born one; one day (or three nights: P) after the death of a fellow-pupil and of a Śrotriya of the same village (Ā). The study will be interrupted at a Śrādhha dinner for one day; on the Ashṭakā days; for three days if he hears of the death of a teacher or of the death of those whose family-head he (i.e. the teacher) is. It is to be interrupted on receiving gifts as at the śrāddha; when he has laid down the lumps of flour to the fathers; if he has followed the funeral of dead person; in a village where a corpse is and in the neighbourhood of a corpse-bearer (S). It should be stopped in the cremation-ground; and for three nights on the death of one who has performed with him

*Occasions, places & circumstances calling for Anadhyāyas*

the Tanūnapatra ceremony (by which the Yajmāna and the officiating priest pledge their faith to do no harm to each other) (P). The study is interrupted for one day and night, if the ruler of his country has died and if some one who has reverentially approached him has died (G).

*Natural Phenomena*

The interruptions last until the same time next day on the occurrence of portents and miracles; in case of lightning, thunder, and rains until the twilight has thrice passed. There is a break on foggy days; if a high wind blows; if a cloud emits heavy rain (S), if a meteor falls or distant thunder is heard; or if fiery apparitions are seen; if the earth quakes if clouds appear; and if hoar-frost lies on the ground (P). If an eclipse of the sun or moon takes place, or if there is a whirlwind, the study is interrupted till the same time next day; if there is a storm, as long as it lasts. Kh. quotes the Kaṭhas and Kauthumas according to whom when the rain has fallen, study is forbidden as long as the water stands in the ditches.

*Normal and recurring periods of time when there is a break.*

There is an interruption on the fourteenth days (of the bright and dark fortnights); on the new-and full-moon days; on the last nights *i. e.* days also of each season; at night during twilight and after sun-set *i. e.* the latter half of the night is allowed for study; on the three festival days which come once in four months (viz. the days of the ancient Vedic chāturmāsya sacrifices in Kārtika, Phālguna and Āshāḍha); at the beginning of the northern course of the sun, *i. e.* at the Uttarāyaṇa

study is forbidden for one night with one day before and after it; when a new season begins, until the same time next day.

*Places where study is prohibited.*

There is a break of Vedic study in the neighbourhood of a Śūdra, of a dog and of a woman that has recently been confined or has her course; on a cremation-ground, in the forest which belongs to the village; in a village with a corpse, on a carriage-road while on a chariot; when one has climbed up a tree, or descended into a pit; while one is immersed in water or is on a bridge; in the camp of an army; in the presence of a Brahmin who has not had his meal or of cows (that have eaten nothing) (S.); or at the border of a village.

*Some special circumstances calling for a break.*

The Vedic recitation is to be stopped as long as the following impediments are present, Viz, when the sound of a sāman is heard [because according to Oldenberg loud musical sounds like these would disturb the recitation of Ṛik or Yajus texts. It appears to me that later on this led to the misunderstanding that the sound of sāman-recitations was impure ]. It is stopped also when the sound of a lute or what is forbidden is heard or while any body is crying; when forbidden sights are seen and when foul smell is smelt. There is an interruption while a person of a low caste, or one who has lost his caste, is in sight. Similarly when a dog, an ass, an owl or a jackal is heard barking, braying or hooting, there is a break.

There is to be no recitation while one is suffering

bodily pain, is naked, or impure with the remnants of food; after the shaving of the hair and the beard until the bath; while being rubbed in the course of bathing; while being anointed; when having sexual intercourse or with covered hands (S) or while running.

A miraculous or happy event or the arrival of a distinguished person ["शिष्टागमनेऽनध्यायः"] necessitates a break.

S. IV, 7 52 says "Should any of these cases arise against his will, let him resume his recitation after having held his breatn and looked at the sun" and that sets a very reasonable and practical limitation on the interrupting capacity of the Anadhyāyas. It also appears from the sūtra 53rd immediately following, that during the first term between the Upākaraṇa and Utsarga, the causes of interruption except thunder, lightning and rain operate even in the case of the study of the vedāṅgas (like kalpa) whereas in the five and a half months following the Utsarga *i.e.* the 2nd term, the study of the Kalpa is to go on uninterrupted.

**SECTION D :** The Samāvartana ceremony.

*The ancient Convocation*

The Samāvartana ceremony marked the close of studentship after which the snātaka (so-called because snāna or bath was the main element in this ceremony) could enter upon marital life and found a household or remain celibate, if he so chose, but his main duty was to turn his attention to the maintenance of his family from which he was so long absent, residing as he did in the house of his teacher. This ceremony

therefore marks the same stage in a student's career as graduation in a modern university.

The most detailed description of this ceremony is found in the H. G. S. and we will therefore follow it in the main, adding differing details into brackets:-During the Uttarāyaṇa, in the bright fortnight, under the Nakshatra Rohiṇi or Mṛigaśiras or Tishya or Uttarā phalgunī or Hasta, Chitrā or the two Viśākhas, the bath may be taken, of course, with the teacher's permission. He either goes to a place in the neighbourhood of water or they make an enclosure in a cowstable covered on all sides; that enclosure the student enters before sunrise and in that enclosure, the whole ceremony is performed because some say "On that day the sun should not shine upon him. For the shining one (*i. e.* the sun) shines by the splendour of those who have taken the bath. Therefore the face of a snātaka is, as it were, resplendent". [The method of covering the door is indicated in ĀP. Viz. hanging over its door a skin with the hair inside. G. simply refers to an enclosure to the north or east of the teacher's house and Kh. gives the option of going to an assembly-hall which would resemble the convocation-hall of a modern university, and adds that the performance of the ceremony in an assembly-hall would bring renown, that in a cow-stable, cattle and that in an enclosure near his teacher's house, holy lustre]. Here he puts wood on the fire, performs the rites down to the Vyāhṛiti-oblations and puts a piece of Palāśa wood on the fire and then sacrifices with the Vyāhṛitis as above and then offers some oblations with appropriate mantras. [The putting of

*Variations according to other G. S.*

the wood is done after clasping the feet of the teacher and then he takes a position in the northern part of the enclosure on eastward-pointed Darbha grass or on a bull's hide (S) to the east of eight vessels of water. Then he besprinkles himself with water from these vessels, according to P. G. says that the besprinkling is done with lukewarm scented water boiled with all kinds of herbs and is practically done by the student himself or both]. He then serves food to the Brāhmaṇs (and eats himself also according to G or eats curds or sesa num seeds according to P) and securing their blessings, he discharges himself of his vow, and worships the sun. He then loosens the upper garment, then takes off the under garment and then the girdle (which according to ĀP. is handed over to a Brahmin who hides it at the root of an Udumbara tree or in a tuft of Darbha grass) and then discards his staff. The girdle, the staff and the black antelope's skin are thrown into water. Then sitting to the west of the fire, facing the east, he touches a razor and gets his beard shaved first then the hair in his armpits, then the hair on his head and then the hair of his body (leaving only the lock of hair required by custom according to G), and then the nails (For details of the shaving operation see chapter on 'Dress'). Then having rubbed himself with powder such as is used in bathing, he cleanses his teeth with a stick of Udumbara wood, with a verse. Then the teacher makes him wash himself with luke-warm water. [ĀP says the bath is accompanied with a Shampoo. This 'washing' in H. corresponds to the besprinkling of himself with

luke-warm water in P. & G., where it precedes the loosening of the girdle and the shaving which is followed by a second formal bath]. His friends or relations then bring him all sorts of perfumes or ground sandal wood. He besprinkles all that with water and worships the gods by raising his joined hands towards the east. Then he anoints himself with that salve of sandal-wood (P. refers to salving of the nose, mouth, and eyes and whole body). People then bring him a pair of new garments; he besprinkles them with water and puts on first the lower garment and then touches water and then puts on the upper garment and sits down to the west of the fire facing the east. They next bring him two earrings and a perforated pellet of sandal-wood or of Badari wood overlaid with gold (at its aperture); these two things he ties to a Darbha blade, holds them over the fire and pours over them ( into the fire ) oblations of ghee with mantras in praise of gold. Having thrice washed the two earrings in a vessel of water and after moving them in the water from left to right, he puts them on in the two ears and clasps them with appropriate Mantras. With a Mantra in praise of herbs, he ties the pellet of wood to his neck. Then he puts on a wreath, with two verses; then with another verse, he anoints himself with the Traikakuda salve, or with some other salve, if he cannot get that. Then he looks into a mirror with a formula. He takes a staff of reed or Bamboo which somebody hands to him and with another formula, wipes it off thrice upward from below. He then swings the staff three times, from left to right over his head. With the formula "Do not pinch" he steps into

the shoes and then takes up the parasol ( P. S. and Ā. mention the turban). If the staff falls down, he takes it up with a verse. They then bring him a chariot, horse or elephant which he mounts with suitable Mantras, for entering the village and then goes to (and passes the night in, according to Ā.) a place where they will do honour to him with the Argha reception. ( According to G. after the shoes and the Bamboo staff etc, are taken up, he approaches the teacher in the assembly saying "May I be dear to you" and sitting down near him, he touches the sense-organs at his head and then it is the teacher that offers him the Argha reception or the drives in a chariot, comes back and then the Argha takes place according to others). For the details of the Argha reception see the section on hospitality in the chapter on "Manners and Customs''. According to ĀP. after taking the parasol and staff, he keeps silence until the stars appear and then he goes away towards the east or north, worships the quarters, the stars and the moon and having spoken with a friend he may go where he likes. ĀP. further gives another way for performing the Samāvaratana. "He bathes silently at a bathing place and puts silently a piece of wood on the fire. He then sits down on a bunch of grass at a place where they are going to honour him with an Argha reception. According to S., after the Bamboo-staff etc, are given to him, he sits that day in solitude and mounting a chariot, goes home after first going to a place where they will perform for him the Argha reception with a cow or goat or he returns, making his start from a herd of cows or a fruit-bearing tree; he then descends and eats that day his

favourite food. A gift to the teacher, of the garments, parasol or of something else completes the ceremony.

SECTION E : Some other features of the educational system.

*Post-graduate study and moral discipline almost a life-long duty.*

It should be noted that after the Samāvartaṇa neither Veda-study nor the operation of rules for moral development are suspended. In the first place, the snātaka can carry on his studies and vows as a teacher and secondly as a student also. Ā (III, 5, 15 and 16). lays down that during the six months of study (the vedic term) "One who has performed the Samāvartana should live according to the regulations for Brahmchārins but some say that he (the snātaka) should have intercourse with his wife. A dignified demeanour is recommended hence-forward and rules of conduct for a snātaka are laid down, (which will be found in the Chapter on "Manners and Morals etc."). Particularly relevent in this connection is the duty of Svādhyāya or daily recitation of vedic texts which is laid down as one of the five Mahāyajñas or great sacrifices which a married snātaka has to daily offer. A description of these five Mahāyajñas will be found in the chapter on 'Religion'. The Svādhyāya—a daily duty of the snātaka-householder is described thus in Ā (III 2 to 4). He goes out of the village, bathes, sips water on a clean spot, and sits on Darbha grass.

*The Svādhyāya*

Then looking at the horizon or closing his eyes, he recites the Vyāhritis first; then the Sāvitrī (pāda by pāda etc.) and then the ṛichas, the yajus, the Sāmanas, the Atharvan and Angirasa hymns, the Brāhmaṇas; the Kal-

pasūtras; the Gāthās, Nārāśaṁsīs the Itihāsa and Purāṇas. Then he satiates the deities, the Ṛishis and the teachers like Sumanta etc. and the fathers, and then he returns to his house,

STCTION F : The teacher and the pupil.

*The meaning of the term Upanayana, Oldenberg's view.*

A careful consideration of the meaning and significence of the term 'Upanayana' will show how prominently the teacher figured in the ceremony of Upanayana or Initiation. Prof. Oldenberg (S. B. E. Vol. XXIX) differs from Prof. Stenzler who seems to understand the term 'Upa-nī' to mean "to introduce a student to his teacher" and says "The person that introduces the student (Upanayati-te) is not the father or a relation of the youth who could be supposed to lead him to the teacher, but the teacher himself; he introduces him to the Brahmcharya or introduces him with himself and the student enters upon (Upaiti) the Brahmcharya or enters with (Upaiti) the teacher; he who has thus entered upon studentship is consequently designated as the Upeta and for the initiation which is usually called Upanayana, occasionally also the word Upāyana is used. He then quotes in support Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa XI 5.3.13 where Saucheya says to Uddālaka Āruṇi "I will enter (as a student) with the reverend one (Upāyāni, Bhagavantam)," and Āruṇi replies "Come, enter (with me)" (Ehy Upehi). After this "he initiated him" (Tamhopaninye). He also points out that in Śatapatha Br. XI 5.4.16 it is stated that according to some a teacher who has initiated a Brāhmaṇa as a student (Brāhmaṇam brahm-

charyam Upanīya) should abstain from sexual intercourse, for a student who enters upon studentship (Yo Brahmcharayam Upaiti) becomes as it were a Garbha. Finally he shows that the Budhist terminnology regarding the entering into the order or upon a life of righteousness is clearly connected with that followed for instance, in the dialogue between Saucheya and Āruṇi. In my opinion this is making much ado about a simple point. 'Upanayana' literally means "Drawing or carrying or leading near" and it matters but little *who* leads the boy-pupil to his teacher: the teacher or a relation of the boy. What is important is that Upanayana marks the beginning of a period of life during which, the pupii will be in very close touch with the teacher to whom he is brought (Upanita) in the ceremony. The teacher then was the pivot of the whole system of education with which the state had very little to do. In fact as the chapter on 'political life' will show, the G. S. do not seem to notice the existence of a large kingdom, much less an empire, but simply speak of small principalities (like the city-states of Greece) each with its own ruler. The teacher who was a Snātaka boarded and lodged a certain number of students in his own house and taught them the Vedas and the Vedaṅgas (the Śruti and the Smṛiti). In return he received gifts (voluntarily given) from them when the study was completed and the most devoted service and attendance while they lived with him. While thus, in a measure, the teacher was compensated for his labours, the relation between the teacher and the pupil was in no sense mercenary but sacred and almost spiritual. In many

*Private system.*

cases the father himself was the teacher and the student received education at the Home-university !

*The relation between the teacher and the pupil.*

In the Upanayana ceremony, there is ample evidence of the closeness of the relation between the teacher and the pupil because it is the teacher who is the friend, philosopher and guide of the pupil, rather than the father except when the father and the teacher were one person. The pupil approaches him for initiation to a life of vedic study which is almost a second birth of the boy (which is responsible for the term 'dvija' : twice-born, as applied to the higher castes who alone had the privilege of being initiated). The boy offers oblations into the Gṛihya-fire through the teacher by whose side, he sits. The boy is in fact formally given in charge to the teacher. The teacher ties the girdle round the boy and arranges the skin etc. But more important are the questions and answers that pass between them. "Whose brahmachārin art thou ?" the teacher asks. "Yours," says the student. The teacher asks, "Do you descend from the same Ṛishis?" Oldenberg states here that "the answer to this by the pupil 'Samānārsheyobhavāni' (I descend from the same ṛishis, sir) stating an ideal yet fictitious Samānarsheyatva of the teacher and the students represents a trace and perhaps the only trace of an ancient rule requiring a real Samānārsheyatva of the teacher and the student. As long as the ritual differences between the different Gotras, of which only a few traces have survived in the vedic tradition, had retained their full importance, it was hardly possible that a young brāhmaṇa should be con-

fided to the guidance of a teacher who sacrificed to and invoked the gods in another way than the custom of the pupil's own family required". The teacher's drawing close to himself of the pupil by drawing his right hand towards himself, his seizing of his right hand, accompanied by instructions in vows, his touching of the pupil's heart with words like "Thy heart shall dwell in my heart. To me alone thou shalt adhere".— all these symbolical acts with appropriate accompanying Mantras show how completely the pupil resigned himself to the control of the teacher with what looks like an oath of allegiance sworn by the pupil. "Approaching his mouth to the boy's mouth" is similarly symbolical. ĀP. mentions in connection with the rite of Initiation that if the teacher wishes that the student should not be estranged from him, he takes the student by the right hand with an appropriate verse.

*The pupil in charge of the teacher.*

The respectful behaviour of the pupil after Initiation to his teacher is thus described by Pāraskara. If the teacher calls him, he shall rise and then answer. If he, the teacher, call him while he is lying down, he should answer sitting; if sitting, standing; if standing, walking up to the teacher; if the teacher is then walking, running up to him. The alms or food that he gets by begging are to be announced to the teacher and then eaten with his permission. There is a typical description of the class-room teaching in S.IV. 8.The teacher sits to the east or north, the pupil to the south with his face to the north, or two students shall be

*Respect shown to the teacher.*

*The vedic class generally small.*

thus seated and even more than two, according as there is space for them. This shows us that the number of students constituting a vedic class could vary from one or two to a larger figure, strictly according to the accomodation available and convenience of teaching work. The student or students were to sit on seats lower than that of the teacher and never on the same seat with him while receiving instructions; there are to be no outstreched feet, no streching of the arms under the kness, no forming a lap with the feet or holding them like an axe, nor leaning of the body against a support on the part of a pupil. The lesson begins when the student says "Recite sir !". The teacher then causes him to pronounce the syllable 'Om'. 'Om !' replies the other. Then they recite uninterruptedly, no one shifting his place during the recitation and no body being allowed to step between the teacher and students who study. When the teacher has finished his recitation, the pupil or pupils embrace the teacher's feet and say, "We have finished, sir" and then go away to their business.

*The teacher also observes some rules.*

That this system of education did not mean merely one-sided discipline (on the part of the student) is rendered clear from the instruction in S. that the teacher has to refrain from flesh and having sexual intercourse during the three nights or one day just preceding the Āraṇyaka Vratas; similar instructions are found elsewere also.

There is an optional gift to the Āchārya recommended at the Upanayana and he also received the former garment of the student for himself when he made him put

on another. But substantial gifts are made to the teacher at the time of the Samāvartana when we are told that the pair of garments, the turban, the earrings, the jewels or perforated pellet of sandal or Badari wood over-laid with gold at its aperture, the garland, the staff, the shoes, and the parasol worn by the student in the Samāvartana ceremony are made over to the teacher. Similarly a turban, a vessel and a good cow are the gifts for the teacher when he has taught the Āraṇyaka texts to the student.

### SECTION F : Physical training.

That physical development was looked upon as a necessary adjunct of the intellectual and moral development sketched above is clear from the various prayers for strength and vigour on different occasions *e. g.* in Ā (I, 21, 4) in the Upanayana ceremony, Indra is invoked to grant strength, Agni to grant vigour etc. But this appears to have been so easily and unconsciously achieved that there was no necessity for special physical exercise for the pupil. If the major portion of even modern India lives in the villages, it is no wonder that in ancient times, cities were the exception rather than the rule and were few and far between. The student therefore passed his time in the pure atmosphere of a village and lived in communion with Nature. The going out for alms, in the morning and evening and the gathering of fuel-sticks were duties that entailed sufficient hard work (or at least good exercise on the part of the student ). In addition to this, there was the establishment of the fire in the proper place, wiping with his hand the ground round it, sprinkling water round it, bending his right knee

and putting fuel in the fire. All these gave good exercise. Besides the recitation of the Vedas was not merely intellectual or memory-work but was excellent exercise (vocal though) also. But the most important thing from the point of view of physical as well as sprititual exercises was the Prāṇāyāma in the Sandhyā-adoration. This restraint of the breath twice every day was a wonderful yogic exercise and was by itself enough to bring about the physical well-being of the student because Prāṇāyāma is not merely an exercise for the lungs but is an exercise that penetrates to all parts of the body as any careful student of that yogic exercise knows.

The importance attached to the Daṇḍapradāna which is a regular ceremony shows that the student was strong enough to defend himself and protect others with a Daṇḍa. The academic costume definitely laid down for the student consisting of their skins (serving as upper garments), their lower garments, their girdles, and their staffs, gives us an idea of the outfit of the ancient student which bears some resemblance to the modern outfit of the scouts or rovers and a school or College uniform.

# Chapter XVIII

## Religion.

### PART 1. THE ṚV. PERIOD.

As the ṚV Hymns were composed in a period extending over some centuries, they do not present a picture of religious development in a particular stage consistent in all details. From the naïve conception of deities as personifications of the powers and manifestations of Nature like the Dawn etc., to the elaboration of the Soma ritual, the division of sacrificial work among several priests (the hotṛi, the Adhvaryu, the Udgātṛi and several assistants 7 in number) and a multiplicity of gods:–all these stages can he traced in the ṚV. Hence the earlier view that the ṚV. presents us with a simple outpouring of the primitive religious consciousness, does not now hold the field. However the sacrifice is not as elaborate as in the Brāhmaṇa period and the creation of abstract deities has not made much progress. The hymns of the ṚV are much occupied with the Soma ritual and the majority of them touch upon one aspect or the other of it; animal sacrifices except the Aśva–Medha are not dealt with, (whether the story of Śunaḥśepa indicates the existence of human sacrifice

*Neither a babbling of primitive religious consciousness nor Ritual elaboration in the ṚV.*

*Sacrifice.*

or is a mere reminiscence of a more ancient practice cannot be determined !). A very ingenious theory is that the Purusha-Sūkta of the ṚV. describes an actual though ancient human sacrifice because that sūkta is employed in the purusha-medha in the White Yajur-Veda.

*General characteristics.*

Bloomfield[1] is of opinion that the religion of the the ṚV. is a heiratic one, and meant for the upper classes who could afford the expensive materials and costly Dakshiṇās of the sacrifices and not the popular religion represented in the Atharva-Veda and the Gṛihya-sūtras with their single fire and simple rites. The practical and utilitarian aspect of religion is evident. Prayers and oblations are offered with expectations of definite rewards from the Gods.

*The Theism of the ṚV.*

The hymns of the ṚV. being mainly invocations of the gods meant to accompany the oblations of Soma-juice and the fire-sacrifice of melted butter, its religion according to Macdonell[1] is essentially a polytheistic one, assuming a pan-theistic colouring only in a few of its latest hymns. Elsewhere[2] he states. " The evolution of religious thought in the ṚV. led to the conception of a creator distinct from any of the chief deities and superior to all the gods". The tendency to invoke different gods as if each of them was the highest for the time being has been designated

1 Religion of the Veda.

2 Vedic Reader P.XVIII. 3 H. S. L. P. 132.

*Henotheism.*

as 'Henotheism' by Max Müller and others. The gods are as a rule thirty-three in number assigned to the three regions viz. earth, air and heaven: the most important being Indra, Agni, the sun and Varuṇa. There are goddesses like Uśas; dual divinities like Mitrā-Varuṇa; groups of deities like the Maruts; abstract deities like (Dhatṛi, Prajāpati, Manyu, Śradhhā and Aditi) and some minor deities like the Ṛibhus.

Dr. Bollensen[1] holds that not only were human forms assigned to the Gods (in imagination) but they were actually represented in a sensible manner. *e.g.* in II,33,9 and I 25, 13. V 52, 15, according to him, actually distinguishes the Maruts from their images. There is no agreement on this point among scholars many of whom hold that image-worship did not exist either in this or the next period.

## PART 2. THE LATER SAṀHITAS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

The Sacrificial ritual has now become inordinately elaborate. The number of priests has gone up to 16 or 17! The animal and Soma sacrifices have become more complicated. The sacrifice in fact has assumed such an all-important position that it practically usurps the place of the ṚV. deities who are not of much consequence now. As a result, some of the minor deities of the ṚV. period have either disappeared or exist in name only. New abstract deities like Prajāpati, Kāla and kāma brought

*The Ritual.*

1. Referred to by Ghate: Lectures on the Rig Veda. P. 194.

into vogue by the theosophical and philosophical discussions of the Āraṇyakas and Upanishads come into existence and Rudra and Vishṇu become popular gods. Gandharvas, Apsarases, nāgas etc. are raised to a semi-divine position. But sacrifice is the only power that counts. It could bend even the gods to the will of the sacrificer. The efficacy of the ritual depended now on the correct pronunciation of the mantras recited because it was their *sound* and not their meaning that was credited with power. The Viniyoga (employment or application) of the ṚV hymns to the details of the sacrifice was fixed upon with or without reference to their meaning. So ludicrously logical was the development of the sacrificial cult that the list of sacrificial victims in the Yajurveda-texts includes human beings as well. The various theories regarding the Purushamedha have already been mentioned; to it may be added one more, that it was borrowed from the non-Āryan aborigines.[1]

*New gods.*

Belvalkar and Ranade[2] describe the transition from this excessive ritualism to the comparatively ritual-free speculations of the Āraṇyakas & Upanishads thus. "The Brāhmaṇas had insisted already upon the way of works as constituting the summum bonum of men. Then came the revolt of the "Heretics" which set the post-Brāhmaṇa world a-thinking as to the exact relations that ought to be susbisting between Karma and Jñāna. The Āraṇyakas in the spirit of true reform tried

*The Revolt and the Compromise*

1. Vaidya H. V. L. 2. H, I. P. Vol. 2. P. 86

to reconcile the two in such a manner that the way of works might be maintained and yet subordinated to the way of knowledge, an attempt which found its fulfilment in the Upanishads" and "This was effected by formulating the theory of the Āśramas or stages of life, of which there seem to have been only three at first–student, householder and forester; the fourth: the recluse being subsequently added. Thus the continuity of tradition was maintained and the circumstance was given an outward expression in as much as the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas and the Upanishads were made to constitute parts of one whole revealed text."[3]

*Idols*

The problem of the existence of idols or images has already been discussed in the preceding part. That image-worship existed before Buddha and is implied in Pāṇini's sūtra "Vāsudevārjunābhyām kan" is the only certain thing.

## PART 3. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

*General characteristics.*

If religion is the sense of duty which we feel from the relation in which we stand to some superior power, then a *rite* is a formal act of religion. We are here concerned with domestic ritual only as the very title and subject-matter of the Gṛihya-sūtras show. Ritual dominates every page of Gṛihya-literature. In fact, the general tendency of Indian religious literature at this time as remarked already was to ritualize all action and spiritualize all life. This

3. Ibid P. 54.

ritual chiefly centred round *fire-worship*. In fact throwing oblations into the fire and reciting appropriate mantras are the 'sine-qua-non' of every ceremony nay, of every phase of it. They accompany every act of penance, expiation or propitiation. Not that fire was the only deity. The vedic pantheon was accepted without any material changes but Agni being the priest, the messenger, the intermediary between heaven and earth, the gods were propitiated principally through oblations offered into Agni who was the oblation-bearer (havya-vāhana). The Gṛihya-sūtras therefore still maintain contact with the Irāṇian system of the preservation and worship of fire. H. XI 16 2 shows that there were people who did not set up the śrauta fires. *e. g*. the Gṛihyāgni would be a substitute in their case for Dakshiṇāgni in the ritual of the śrāvaṇī but every house-holder must preserve and worship the sacred domestic fire. There was almost a craze for sacrifices and naturally there is a bewildering number of them if we take the śrauta ritual also into consideration. The G. S. deal with the domestic fire and sacrifices only but they often take for granted the existence of the three Śrauta fires and the perfomance of the grander śrauta sacrifices side by side, though they are not compulsory.

In the first place, therefore, we describe the ritual of the domestic fire and the principal sacrifices that every house-holder was expected to offer daily and at different periods and stages of life.

SECTION A : The Gṛihya-sacrifices.

The time for setting up the domestic fire which later

is to be kept constantly is, as a rule, the marriage. The optional times in various Gṛihya-sūtras are—(1). the time of the division of the inheritance (S & P) or in case no division takes place, (2). The eldest surviving member should kindle the fire after the death of the head of the family or the house-holder (S & G).

*The occasions for setting up the Gṛihya-fire.*

As the Gobhila G. S. gives the most detailed description of the setting up of the Gṛihya-fire and the Gṛihya sacrifices, we shall follow it in the main, marking the differences if any from other Gṛihya-sūtras into brackets. The time for the performance of the domestic sacrifices including of course the setting up or ādhāna of the fire is the Uttarāyaṇa, the time of the increasing moon and an auspicious day and before noon. All cermonies are followed by the Anvāhārya (Śrāddha or a mess of cooked food called the Anvāhārya food to the priests.) The feeding of worthy Brahmins takes place at the end of each ceremony. The 'setting up' is to be particularly celebrated on the coincidence of an auspicious Tithi with an auspicious Nakshatra or of such a Nakshatra with a Parva on the full-moon-day or the new-moon-day.

*The Agnyādhāna*

*The time for it.*

*Common features.*

A student who has studied the Veda and is about to seize the wife's hand ( to marry her ) should fetch water from a hidden place; should sweep a spot which is inclined towards the north-east or

*The Lakshaṇa or Standard mode of preparing the place for the fire.*

which is level and should besmear it (particularly the surface on which the fire is placed) on all sides with cow-dung. Beginning from the centre of it, he should draw a line from west to east, another line from south to north which tonches that line at its western end and three lines from west to east touching the north-ward-turned line at three different points) in its middle portion (*i.e.* at neither of its ends). He then should besprinkle those lines with water. In this way the lakshaṇa (*i.e.* the standard preparation of the place for the sacred fire) is performed every time.

He should then get his fire from one of the following places:—

*The soucce of his fire.*

The house of a Vaiśya who is rich in cattle (S); the house of a person rich in cattle or from a frying pan or from the house of one who offers many sacrifices-be he a Brāhmaṇa or Rājanya or a Vaiśya or he may kindle a new fire by attrition and may set it up but that does not bring prosperity though it be pure. The same fire with which the marriage-rites have been performed and which is carried behind the the newly-married couple is kept up by the bride-groom; and that becomes his (Sacred) domestic fire; with the words "Bhūr Bhuvaḥ Svaḥ", they carry the fire taken from any of these sources forward (*i. e.* to the place described in the preceding paragraph) so that they have it in front of them.

He takes as his Yajñopavita (i.e. sacrificial cord) a string or a garment or simply a rope of kuśa grass. The upavīta-string should consist of nine threads. A string was considered the regular and preferable form of the Upavīta. The commentator of Gobhila says that if the Ūpavita has been lost, in a forest for instance, and if it is impossible to get a string, then a garment or rope of Kuśa grass is worn as an Upavita. Raising his right arm and putting his head into it (the Upavita) he suspends (the cord) over his left shoulder, so that it hangs down on his right side: Thus he becomes a Yajñopavītin. Raising his left arm and putting his head into the Upavīta he suspends it over his right shoulder, so that it hangs down on his left side: thus he becomes Prāchīnāvītin *which he is to become only* at sacrifices offered to the manes. He goes in a northern direction from the fire, washes his hands and feet, and sips water three times and wipes off (the water) twice. Having besprinkled his feet (with water), let him besprinkle his head. Let him touch with water the organs of his senses viz. the two eyes, the nose, and the two ears. This Āchamana and Upasparśana is to be done with the proper tīrthas (parts of the hand) suited to the different ceremonies; e. g. the tīrtha sacred to the Gods lies the root of the little finger; that sacred to the Rishis in the middle of the fingers; that sacred to men, at the tips of the fingers, that sacred to Agni, in the middle of the hand; and that sacred to the manes bet-

*The Yajñopavita.*

*Prachināvītin*

*The touching with and sipping of water.*

ween the fore-finger and the thumb. The two acts are to be done while he is holding his hands between his knees so that the shoulders are brought forward and not put back, and bending down and looking at the water. Let him sip water that touches his heart; the water should not be warm or foamy. Though not relevent to the context, some special injunctions about the Āchamana and Upasparśana may be cited here. They are not to be done, while walking, standing, laughing, looking about, throwing up the water with his fingers, uttering a sound, wearing a part of his undergarment as if it were an upper garment, while wearing sandals, with a turban on his head or with out-stretched feet. Water must be sipped a second time after sleeping, eating, sneezing, taking a bath, drinking something, changing his garments, walking on a high road or going to a crematory. (Gobhila G.S.).

*Regular morning & evening oblations*

To offer oblations in this Gṛihya fire in the morning and evening is the regular daily duty of the Snātaka. This duty starts in the following manner. If his service of the domestic fire starts before the actual marriage ceremony then, when he puts the last piece of wood on the fire at the end of his studentship, thereby his morning oblation may be taken to have been offered and as the morning and evening oblations start hereafter, *he actually begins with an* evening oblation. Similarly if his fire-worship starts from the time of marriage, the oblations of fried grain etc. prescribed for the wedding are considered as the sacrificer's morning oblation, in his newly established

Gṛihya fire; so that the regular oblations start as in the former case with the *Sāyamāhuti*. Before the time for setting the fire in a blaze (*i. e.* before sun-set for the evening oblation and before sun-rise for the morning oblation), he should fetch from a hidden place in the evening and morning, water with which the different acts such as sipping water etc. are performed or the water may be fetched only in the evening or the water may be drawn out of a water-pot or a water-barrel. The evening oblation is offered after sun-set and the morning one after sun-rise as follows:–Having put wood on the sacred fire, having swept the ground round it, and bending his right knee, he should pour out to the south of the fire, his joined hands full of water with the words "Aditi! Give thy consent"; to the west with "Anumati! Give thy consent"; to the north with "Sarasvati! Give thy consent." With (the words) "God Savitṛi! Give thy impulse," he should sprinkle water round the fire once or thrice, so as to keep his right side turned towards it interchanging the points at which he begins and ends (the sprinkling of water) and sprinkling so as to encompass what he is going to offer (with the streams of water). Let him then make oblations of the sacrificial food, whether cooked or raw over the fire. If it is raw, he should sacrifice it after having washed it and having let the water drop off. If it consists of curds or milk or rice-gruel, he should sacrifice it with a brazen bowl or with the pot in which the oblations of boiled rice are prepared or with the sacrificial spoon called sruva. In the evening the first oblation is offered with the formula "To Agni Svāhā!"; the second (sacred to Prajāpati) silently

and in the north-eastern part (of the fire). In the morning the first oblation is offered with "To Sūrya Svāhā; the second as above. Having put a piece of wood on the fire, and having again sprinkled water round it, he should pour out his joined hands full of water in the same way as above, with only one change in the Mantras Viz. "Thou hast given thy consent" instead of 'Give thy consent'. Having circumambulated the fire so as to turn his right side towards it, having poured out the remains of water and filled the vessel again and put it in its proper place he may do whatever his business is i.e. singing the Vāmadevya or the Brahma-yajña prescribed after the morning oblation (according to the commentary). In this way from the time he begins to offer these two daily sacrifices, he should perform them himself or should have them performed for him by some one, till the end of his life. Some authorities quoted by Gobhila say "If they like, his wife may offer the morning and evening oblations over the domestic fire. For his wife is (as it were) his house and that fire is the domestic fire."

*The Pañcha-Mahāyajnas or the five great daily sacrifices.*

When the morning or evening meal, is ready, he should make his wife say "It is ready" and himself reply "Om" and then in a low voice, say "to that food I bring adoration, may it not fail"? He then should speak only what refers to the preparation of the food, though he may converse with guests, if he likes. He should take some portion of the food which is fit for sacrifice, should pour over it some liquid fit for

*The Vaiśvadeva or sacrifice to the gods.*

sacrifice (such as ghee, milk or curds) and should sacrifice it silently in the fire with his hand, the first oblation being sacred to Prajāpati, and the second to Agni Svishṭakṛit. Then he should offer the Balis, inside or outside the fire-chamber (the agnyāgāra), having well cleansed the ground. Let him pour out water once, and put down Balis in four places and finally sprinkle water on the four Balis together once or on each Bali that he puts down, let him sprinkle water before and afterwards. The Bali he puts down first, belongs to the earth, that in the second place to Vāyu, that in the third place, to the Viśvedevas, and that in the fourth place, to Prajāpati. Then he should offer a Bali (sacred to the waters) near water, another sacred to the herbs and trees near the middle post (of the house) and a third (sacred to the Ākāśa) near the door. Then another Bali to Kāma or Manyu is offered in the bed or in the privy; another to the hosts of the Rākshasas on the heap of sweepings. The remnants of the Balis he should besprinkle with water and should pour them out towards the south from right to left with the sacrificial cord suspended over the right shoulder and under the left arm with the words "Svadhā to the Fathers!" because they i. e. these Balis are sacred to the Fathers. Out of these, the balis to the gods as also those to the Fathers may be offered in the fire sitting, the other balis, he may offer just as it suits him. But

*The Bhūta-yajña or sacrifice to the Beings*

*The Pitṛiyajña*

let him or his wife offer these Balis as long as he stays at home, the wife in the evening and the husband in the morning this is the rule for house-holders; or another person who must be a Brahmin should offer them for him. The food for such Balis may be of the kind that is prepared for the Fathers, or for auspicious purposes (i. e. for being offered to Brāhmaṇas) or for ordinary purposes. If rice and barley are both cooked for one and the same meal, then let him offer Balis of either kind of food. If the food is cooked at different times for one meal, the Bali-ceremony should be performed once only if the food is prepared at different places in one house for one (joint) family, he should perform the Bali ceremony only from the food which is prepared in the kitchen belonging to the house-holder. However of the persons belonging to one family, he whose food becomes ready before that of the house-holder, should offer the prescribed portion in the fire and give to a Brāhmaṇa his share of the food and then should eat himself. Whatever wish, he gives expression to at the end of the Bali-offering, shall be fulfilled. [If the house-holder offers barley-oblations from the barley harvest (in the hot season) to the rice-harvest and rice-oblations from the rice-harvest to the barley harvest, that is called the "Āsasya Bali" (or Bali offered until the next sasya or crop) and that ensures long life. When a donation has been made, a Bali of chaff, or of the scum of boiled rice or of water sacred to Rudra, may be offered. These

*The Manushya-yajña: the sacrifice to Men*

are special forms of the Bali offering distinct from the daily offering].

These then are four out of the five great sacrifices which a married Snātaka has to offer every day viz. the sacrifice to the gods, the sacrifice to the Fathers, that to the beings and that to men. The fifth i. e. the sacrifice to Brahman (i. e. the study of the veda) is the Svādhyāya or daily recitation of the Vedic texts. It has been described in the chapter on "Education". Thus religion entered into the daily (nay hourly) life of the ancient Āryans. In fact all acts, whether physical or mental, involving discipline or self-restraint were looked upon as sacrifices to the Gods.

*The sacrifice to Brahman (the Veda)*

So much about the daily sacrificcs. Now we proceed to the regular periodical sacrifices to be offered by the house-holder. Prominent among these are the sacrifices on the days of the new and full moon. Full-moon time is the time of the maximum distance between the sun and the moon and new-moon time is the time of the minimum distance between them. There is a discussion about the way in which the full-moon and the new-moon days are determined (for which see the chapter on "Astronomy and Astrology"). On that day he should not go away from his house on a journey etc; on the contrary, he should return to it even from a distant place. On that day he may buy goods from others but not sell them. Let him not speak much and strive to speak the truth on that day. In the after-noon,

*The New and Full moon sacrifices.*

husband and wife after having bathed should eat fast-day food, which is pleasant to them. It should contain butter and should be prepared in the due way. They are to sleep on the ground that night; they should spend that night so as to alternate their sleep with waking, entertaining themselves with tales or other discourse but should avoid doing anything unholy (such as cohabiting together). When on a journey, the observance has to be kept by his wife and he may or maynot fast. One who has set up the Śrauta fires should fast and observe all that is enjoined by sacred tradition. Now on the fast-day he gets the pieces of wood which are to be put on the fire, ready. These should be pieces of Khādira or of Palāśa wood or if these cannot be obtained, of the wood of any tree with the exception of Vibhīdaka, Tilvaka, Bādhaka, Nimba and Śālmalī etc. (see p. 153). The Barhis consists of kuśa-grass cut off at the points at which the blades diverge from the main stalk. The blades should be cut off near the roots at the ceremonies directed to the fathers. If kuśa grass cannot be obtained, he may take any kind of grass with the exception of śuka grass etc. (see p. 155). He then gets the following things also ready viz. rice or barley to be cooked for the sacrifice, the pot in which the oblation of cooked-rice or barely is prepared, the pot-ladle, the sruva, water fetched from a hidden place and other things (required in the course of the ritual). Then in the forenoon after having offered his morning oblation he besmears the surface on which the fire is placed, on all sides with cow-dung and walks round the fire on its front side. Having put wood on the fire, he should strew kuśa

*The strewing of grass around the sacred fire.*

grass round it on all sides, to the east, to the south, to the north, and to the west in three or five layers so that always an uneven number of (blades) are put together. He should strew east-ward-pointed grass covering the roots with the points; or should strew it to the west ( of the fire ) and he should draw some of the grass which he has strewn, from the south-end and some from the north-end in an easterly direction. He should arrange the grass so as to lay the points of the southern blades upper-most. This rule for strewing grass round the fire is valid for all ceremonies at which oblations are made. Some lay also branches of Śamī wood or of Parṇa wood round the fire. To the north of the fire, a Sruva full of water is placed; this is the Praṇita water (but it may be dispensed with according to S.). Then the Brahman (another priest than the Hotṛi who is the sacrificer himself) stations himself to the east of that grass, facing the west and with the thumb and the fourth finger of his left hand, he takes one grass-blade from the Brahman's seat (*i.e.* his own), which is specially arranged and throws it away to the south-west in the intermediate direction (between south and west), with the words "Away has been thrown the destroyer of wealth". Having touched water he then sits down on the Brahman's seat with the words, "I sit down on the seat of wealth." Facing the fire he sits raising his joined hands till the end of the ceremony, speaking only what refers to the due performance of the sacrifice and nothing that is unworthy of

*The Praṇita water.*

*The Brahman takes his seat.*

*His services are optional.*

it and expiating any deviation from this rule by murmuring a verse or a Yajus, sacred to Vishṇu. If however, a householder wishes to perform himself the work of both the Hotṛi and the Brahman, he should in the same manner place on the Brahmina's seat, a parasol or an outer garment or a water-pot or a pad of Darbha-grass and should return in the same way in which he has gone and then should perform the other duties. He then washes the mortar, pestle and the winnowing baskets, strews to the west of the fire eastward-pointed Darbha grass, and puts the mortar etc. on that grass. He then pours out with a brass vessel (or with the pot in which the oblations of cooked rice are generally prepared), the grain set apart for the sacrifice: rice or barley; once pronouncing the name of the deity to whom the offering will be made, and *twice*, silently. Then going to the west, with his face turned eastward, he begins to husk the grain with his right hand, placed over the left. After the grain has been winnowed three times, he should wash it thrice (if it is destined) for the gods, twice if for men and once if for the Fathers. Having put a Darbha purifier into the pot in which the oblations are to be prepared, he should pour the grain into it. He then should cook the mess of sacrificial food so that it is well-cooked, stirring it up with the pot-ladle from left to right.

*The Sthālīpāka preparation.*

*Pounding, husking and winnowing the grains.*

*Washing them and cooking them.*

Having put the mess of cooked food on the Barhis and put wood on the fire, he prepares the ājya as follows:-

*Preparation of Ājya and the Pavitrakas or purifiers.*

He takes ghee or oil made from Tila seeds or curds or milk or rice-gruel(any of these substances can be technically considered as 'Ājya'). From that same Barhis, he takes two darbha blades and makes purifiers of them, of the length of one span. Putting a herb between them he cuts them off (not with his nail) with the words "Purifiers are ye sacred to Vishṇu !" He then wipes them with water with the words "By Vishnu's mind, ye are purified". Having purified the Ājya, by pouring it into the Ājya-pot over which he has laid a Darbha purifier, he purifies it (in the pot) with the two north-ward pointed purifiers in the following way:-Holding them with his two thumbs and fourth finger, he purifies the Ājya three times, from west to east, *once with the Yajus*: "May god Savitṛi purify thee with this uninjured purifier, with the rays of the good Sun", and *twice silently*. He then should sprinkle them with water and should throw them into the fire. He then puts that Ājya on the fire and takes it from the fire towads the north:-This is the way to prepare the Ājya.

*The Upastaraṇa (under-spreading) & Abhighāraṇa (over-spreading or Over-pouring). The two Ājya-bhāgas or portions.*

To the east is placed the Ājya, thus prepared; and to the west, the mess of cooked food. Having sprinkled water round the fire and poured Ājya on the mess of cooked food, he begins to sacrifice with the pot-ladle, picking out portions of the sacrificial food (without "Underspreading" or pouring Ājya over the Havis). If how-

ever, he intends to sacrifice so as to underspread the havis with Ājya and to pour Ājya over it, let him sacrifice the first two Ājya portions in the following way. He should take four portions of Ājya (Five are taken by the Bhṛigus) and should sacrifice from west to east on the northern side with (the formula), "To Agni svāhā!" and on the sorthern side with the words "To soma svāhā!". He then cuts off (two or three Avadānas) from the Havis having under-spread (with Ājya) two avadānas from the middle and from the east side, if he belongs to the families of those who make four avadānas and three from the middle, from the east and from the west side, if he belongs to those who make five avadānas, because the "upastaraṇa" (Spreading under) mentioned above and the abhighāraṇa to be mentioned here-after being reckoned as two avadānas form together with the two or three cut-off portions four or five avadānas respectively. He then sprinkles Ājya on the cut-off portions (this is the abhighāraṇa). He anoints the places from which he has cut them off, with Ājya, in order that the strength of the havis may not be lost. He should sacrifice over the middle of the fire with the words "To Agni Svāhā!" once or thrice in that same way. Now for the Svishṭakṛit oblation:–after having 'spread-under' Ājya, he cuts off once a very big avadāna from the eastern part or the northern part of the Havis. Twice he should sprinkle Ājya on it (but if

*The Āvāpa or special characteristic offering of the sacrifice.*

*The Svishṭakṛit oblation.*

he belongs to the families who make five avadānas, he should 'spread under' twice and cut off the avadāna and sprinkle Ājya on it twice). He does not anoint the place from which he has cut off, in order that the strength of the havis may be lost. With the words "To Agni Svisṭakṛit, svāhā ! "he should sacrifice it over the eastern or northern part of the fire. He should sacrifice oblations of Ājya on the chief oblations of cooked sacrificial food with the Mahāvyāhṛitis (If the chief oblations consist of Ājya, they are both preceded and followed by the Mahāvyāhṛiti oblations: P). The avāpa or the chief characteristic offering comes between the two Ājyabhāgas and the Svishṭakṛit oblation. If different sacrifices are performed together, there is only *one* sweeping of the ground round the fire, one putting of fuel on the fire, one Bar his, one sprinkling of water round the fire, one Ājya and one offering of the two Ājyabhāgas. Having cut off the avadānas for all the single sacrifices he sacrifices the svishṭakṛit oblation only once. After he has sacrificed, he should throw that pot-ladle (which he has used in the preceding ceremonies) into the fire, or having washed it, he should take with it, the rest of the sacrificial food and should eat that. The sruva he should not throw into the fire according to some teachers. By one who has not set up the śrauta-fires *i. e.* who is not an Āhitāgni, the mess of cooked food should be offered to Agni at the festival both of the full and of the new-moon. One who has set up the śrauta fires may offer it optionally in this way or to Agni or to *Agni and soma* at the

*Combination of sacrifices.*

*The deities.*

full-moon sacrifice and to Indra or to *Indra and Agni* or to Mahendra at the new-moon sacrifice. *Now at the end of these and all kinds of sacrifices,* a ceremony known as Yajñavāstu should be performed. He puts a piece of wood on the fire and takes a handful of kuśa grass and should dip it thrice into the ājya or havis. He then should besprinkle it with water and throw it into the fire, with a verse invoking Rudra the lord of cattle to whom it is offered. After the Yajñavāstu ceremony is thus over, he should take away the remnants of the havis in a northern direction, should take them out of the vessel (in which they are) and should give them to a Brahmin whom he must also try to feed with other food that has become ready. Then he should try to gain the favour of Brāhmaṇas by gifts of food. A 'full' vessel constitutes the lowest fee at a Pākayajña (the highest being unlimited) which is to be given to a Brāmaṇa; by a 'full' vessel is meant a brass vessel or a wooden cup which has been filled with food cooked or raw or only with fruits. The Brahman is the only officiating priest at the pākayjñas, the sacrificer himself being the hotṛi. Now if he is unable to get for the morning or evening oblations or for the domestic sacrifices of the full or the new-moon, any substance fit for sacrifice or if he is prevented owing to some unavoidable circumstances, he should note that the time for the morning oblations does not pass off

*The Yajña-vāstu—a concluding ceremony.*

*Expiation for the omission of the daily oblations and fortnightly sacrifices owing to unavoidable circumstances.*

until the evening, the time for the evening oblations until the next morning, the time for the full-moon sacrifice until the following new moon and the time for the new moon sacrifice until the following full-moon and should try to obtain during this interval, sacrificial food or a substitute-sacrificer, which-ever he is in need of. If however, he does not succeed, he should cook fruits or leaves of trees or herbs which are sacrificially pure and sacrifice them or should sacrifice at least water. If he, however, fails with all his efforts, to do even this, there is an expiation as follows:-he keeps his vow during that time in which he does not sacrifice by abstaining from food and makes up for the omitted oblations when he has obtained the necessary sacrificial substances thus:- He counts the omitted oblations and pours the corresponding number of oblations into his vessel and sacrifices them in the due way all at once with one mantra. These rules which have been given with regard to the sacrifices of the full and new moon are valid for all the "Havis- oblations. The word "Svāhā" follows the end of the mantra. At Ājya oblations wherever they are prescribed,

*Ājya-oblations.*

he only prepares the Ājya and sacrifices it, picking out portions of it and he does not sacrifice the two Ājya portions nor the Svistakṛit oblation. If no special rule is given, he should sacrifice with the mahāvyāhṛitis before and after the chief ceremonies. At the ceremonies of tonsure, the Initiation and the cutting of the beard, the same procedure is followed as at the wedding, where oblations are made first with three single mahāvyāhṛitis and afterwards with the mahāvyāhṛitis together. The

Vāmadevya is sung for the sake of averting evil at the end of every ceremony optionally.

*The above: a typical description of the Gṛihya sacrifice*

The above description of the full-moon and the new-moon sacrifices gives by the by, a pretty complete description of the type of Gṛihya-sacrifice which recurs at all house-hold ceremonies and includes a description of the setting up of the fire, which corresponds to the Agnyādhāna of the śrauta rithal and which is the necessary preliminary to all sacred acts. Some Gṛihya-sūtras follow the method of describing it (i. e. the Gṛihya sacrifice) for itself without direct reference to any particular sacrifice e.g. Pāraskara and Āśvalāyana enumerate, in the very first chapters of their respective Gṛihya-sūtras, the rites recurring at each sacrifice and then make a remark like the following:–"This is the procedure whenever a sacrifice is performed". Others follow the method of Gobhila *e.g.* Sāṅkhāyana describes this Gṛihya-type in connection with the description of the sacrifice which the bride-groom offers when the father of the bride gives his consent to the match. The Hiraṇyakesin G. S. describes it in connection with the Upanayana rite, a description of which opens the sūtra. Āpastamba gives a part of the common rules in the very beginning and inserts the others in the marriage description, in connection with the sacrifice of Sthālīpāka which the wife is made to offer after being shown the polar and Arundhatī stars. The Khādira G. S. follows very much the same method as that of Āpastamba. So

much about the regularly recurring Gṛihya sacrifices; we now turn to a description of the animal sacrifices.

*Animal sacrifices: Occasions.*

The principal occasions for animal sacrifice are the Ashṭakās (expecially the second or middle Ashṭakā), the Anvashṭakaya ceremony, the Śūlagava sacrifice etc. Other minor ones are, when a cow is offered to the guest (particularly the Snātaka guest), etc. Śāṅkhāyana tells us that a cow was to be killed when the Argha ceremony has been performed, at the wedding and when the newly-married people have arrived at their new home and optionally, a cow may be sacrificed on other occasions *e.g.* on the 11th day when a cow was killed in honour of the deceased person. Aśvalāyana describes the ritual of the animal sacrifice by itself and hence it is convenient to state it here:-To the north of

*The Ritual.*

the domestic fire is prepared the place for the Śāmitra fire *i. e.* the fire of the *Śamitṛi priest* who prepares the flesh of the immolated animal. The animal to be sacrificed is given a drink, washed and placed to the east of the domestic fire with its face to the west. Then oblations are made with the two Ṛichas (ṚV.1.12, 1 seq.) and then the sacrificer

*The killing of the Animal.*

touches the animal from behind with a fresh branch on which there are leaves with the formula "Agreeable to such and such a deity, I touch thee". He sprinkles it with water mixed with barley and rice with the same kind of formula. Having given to the animal to drink of the Prokshaṇī water he should pour out the rest of it along its right fore-foot. Having

carried fire *i. e.* a fire-brand round it (performing the act with out repeating a corresponding mantra) they lead it to the north *i. e.* towards the Śāmitra fire carrying in front of it a fire-brand (the same that had been carried round it). With the two Vapāśrapaṇī ladles, the performer (*i.e.* the Kartṛi corresponding to the Pratiprasthātṛi, of the Śrauta ritual) touches the animal. The sacrificer touches the performer: the touching signifying participation. To the west of the Śāmitra fire, the śamitṛi kills the animal, the head of which is turned to the east or the west and the feet to the north and having placed a grass blade on his side of the animal's navel, the performer draws out the omentum by cutting the body through that grass-blade, cuts it off, seizes it with the two Vapā-śrapaṇīs, sprinkles it with water, warms it at the śāmitra fire; takes it before that fire (*i. e.* the aupāsana or domestic fire according to Nārāyaṇa), roasts it, being seated to the south; goes round the two fires and finally sacrifies it. At the same (*i. e.* the aupāsana) fire, they cook a mess of food. Having cut off the eleven avadānas [(described in the Śrauta sūtras) such as the heart, the tongue etc. (with the exception of the left thigh and the lungs) *i. e.* portions which have to be cut off from all the limbs of the animal], having boiled them at the śāmitra fire, and having warmed the 'heart' on a spit, let him sacrifice first from the mess of cooked food or from the mess mixed with these avadānas. From each of the eleven avadānas he cuts off two portions (or three if he is a Pañchāvattiṇ) so that, as at the typical Pākayajña already described, the upastaraṇa and Pratyabhighāraṇa (the first and second pouring of Ājya) might make up the required number of

four (or five) Āhutis (respectively). In Pāraskara's description (III, 11) the following details implied in the above description are explicitly stated. The animal is washed if it is not a cow and a Palāśa branch is driven into the ground in front of the Śāmitra fire after walking round the two fires. A kuśa rope is wound round that branch and the animal is bound to that branch with that kuṣa rope after being touched with the grass blade. After sacrificing the two oblations before and after the killing of the animal, he silently cacrifices five other oblations sacred to Prajāpati. A limb of the animal is the sacrificial fee. At a sacrifice directed to a special deity, he should sacrifice an animal *belonging to that deity.* The Gobhila and Khādira and Hiraṇyakeśin and ĀP.–sūtras give details of the animal sacrifice in connection with the cow-sacrifice at thə Ashṭakās ( for the description of which the reader is referred to the chapter on ' Funeral rites ' ).

*Some features of the popular fire-worship.*

This fire-worship was not, confined merely to the fire-chamber but was sometimes performed in the *open air* also, generally in the vicinity of water e. g. in the description of the Samāvartana (H.G.S.), we have "यत्रा-पस्तदग्नावग्निमुपसमाधाय". Similar is the significance of the expression "Devayajanadeśa" a spot (outside the village) where sacrifices are offered to the gods. The preservation of fire and the sacrificing of oblations to the fire-god were such persistent features of the popular religion that even the Sūtikāgni (the fire of the lying-in-chamber) was to be main-

tained for one year and every month, a sacrifice to the Tithi of the child's birth was to be offered in it. So absolute was the necessity of maintaining the fire, that inevitable emergencies causing breaks were provided for, by special rules. When a person intends to set out on a journey, he performs the ceremony of 'Samārohaṇa' by which the duties towards the sacred fire are suspended by causing the *fire to enter into* (1) *the sacrificer's body* by his warming his hands at the fire and touching the Prāṇas with the words "Come enter into my Prāṇas or (2) into two Araṇīs, or (3) into an ordinary log of wood which are warmed over the fire and making it *i.e.* the fire redescend on his return by kindling the fire by the attrition of the two Araṇīs. If the fire goes out all of a sudden, he sacrifices the two Sarvaprāyaśchitta and other expiatory oblations (oblations for general expiation). Wife, son, daughter, or pupil may help in the maintenance of the fire-worship.

*A practical though intricate ritual.*

The ritual of the G. S. is pretty intricate, though practical and its intricacy is partly due to the imitation and reproduction of the various parts of the Śrauta ritual and the Soma sacrifices. This will be clear from the following description of the ceremonial of the

*The Punarādhāna*

renewal of the sacred Gṛihya-fire (when the old one has proved unlucky to the sacrificer, as indicated by the death of a Guru or some other misfortune), a ceremonial which is a copy of the Punarādheya of the Śrauta ritual, undertaken by a sacrificer who after having performed the Ādhāna meets with bad luck (Ā.IV,6). An expiatory ceremony is performed on the new-moon-day by those who have

lost a Guru by death or are afflicted by other misfortunes. Before sunrise, they should carry their fire together with its ashes and with its receptacle to the south with "I send far away the flesh-devouring Agni (ṚV.X.16.9)". They throw that fire, at a place where four roads meet or some where else, and walk round it three times, turning their *left* sides towards it, beating their *left* thighs with their *left* hands. Then they should return home without looking back; bathe in water, have their hair beards, nails etc. cut and furnish themselves with new jars, pots, vessels for rinsing the mouth, garlands of Śamī flowers, fuel of śami wood, two pieces of śami wood for kindling a fire, with branches to be laid round the fire with bull's dung and a bull's hide, fresh butter, a stone and as many branches of kuśa grass as there are young women (in the house). At the time of the Agnihotra, he should kindle a fire with the hemistich (ṚV. X.16.9 ab); keeping that fire burning they sit, till the dead of night, repeating the tales of aged people and listening to stories of auspicious contents: Itihāsas and Purāṇās. When all sounds have ceased or when the others have gone to the house or their resting place, the performer of the ceremony should pour out an uninterrupted stream of water, beginning at the south side of the door with the verse (ṚV.53,6) going round the house and ending at the north side, of the door. Having then given its place to the fire, and having spread to the west of it, a bull's hide with the neck to the east and with the hair outside, he should cause the people of the house to step on that hide with the verse (ṚV. X. 18,6). With the verses (ṚV.X.18,4) he

should lay branches round the fire. He then places a stone to the north of the fire, sacrifices with four verses (ṚV.X. 18-1-4) verse by verse and looks at his people with the next following verse. Then the young women of the house holding with their thumbs and fourth fingers tender Darbha blades, should salve their eyes with fresh butter and throw the Darbha blades away, turning their faces away. The performer of the ceremony should look at them while they are salving themselves with the verse (ṚV. X. 18, 7). The performer of the ceremony then touches the stone first (with ṚV,53,8). After that stationing himself to the north—east [while the others go round the fire, with bull's dung and with an uninterrupted stream of water, repeating the three verses (ṚV.X.9-1 seq.)] he should murmur the Verse RV. X. 155, 5. Then he should lead round the fire a tawny-coloured bull. They then sit down at a place where they intend to stop, having put on new garments. There they sit avoiding all sleep, till sunrise. After sun-rise, having murmured the hymns sacred to the sun, having prepared food, having made oblations with the hymn ( RV. 1,97 ) verse by verse, having given to the Brāhmaṇas to eat, he should cause them to pronounce auspicious words. The sacrificial fee consists of a cow, a cup of metal and a new garment.

Among the remaining offerings of the Gṛihya-ritual, the more important ones are those connected with fixed points of time such as certain recurring days, months or seasons of the year (like the new and full-moon sacrifices

*Periodical Gṛihya-rites or sacrifices.*

recurring regularly every month). The first among these is the Chaitra offering (which commemorates perhaps the spring season) taking place on the full-moon day of Chaitra (described only in S. IV 19). From jujube leaves and from flour are made figures or images of couples of animals (or beasts) and a figure with a prominent navel is made in honour of Indra and Agni and balls (or ball-shaped figures) are made in honour of Indra, and images of Nakshatras also. According to Keith (H. O. S. Vol. 32) this suggests a kind of vegetation magic as at the Varuṇapraghāsa of the śrauta ritual.

*The Śrāvaṇa-sacrifice.*

The Śrāvaṇa sacrifice to the serpents on the full-moon-day of the month of Śrāvana is the next periodical one. In the description of this rite, the Gobhila G. S. alone does not explicitly bring out the connection of this offering with the serpents as deities though it is implied but the other G. S. leave no doubt in the matter as besides, the ceremony marks the commencement of the use of a high couch for sleeping upon since the beginning of the rains owing to the fear of the serpents just as the Āgrahāyaṇī festival in the month of Mārgaśīrsha marks the end of this period of sleeping on a high bed-stead, the danger from snakes being over. For a description of both these sacrifices, the reader is referred to the chapter on Flora and Fauna. The Āgrahāyaṇī festival, as the name denotes, has principally the character of a new-year festival (was then Mārgaśīrsha ever the first month of the year? See chapter on Astronomy and Astrology).

*The Praushṭhapada sacrifice.*

On the full moon-day of Praushṭhapada or Bhādrapada the sacrifice to Indra takes place. Milk-rice for Indra is cooked and cakes also are made and put round the fire. Then the offerer, sacrifices the two Ājya portions and Ājya oblations to Indra, to Indrāṇī to Aja Ekapād, to Ahi-Budhnya and to the Praushṭhapadās. Then follows the chief oblation of the whole sacrifice, the oblation, of milk-rice to Indra. After he has eaten his portion of the sacrificial food, he offers a Bali to the Maruts which is offered on Aśvattha leaves because it is said (Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa IV. 3. 36) "The Maruts stood in the Aśvattha tree" when Indra called them to his help against Vṛitra. The Bali is offered with the texts (Vāj, Saṁh. XVII,80-85) mantra by mantra and with the mantra called "Vimukha" repeated only mentally. The feeding of the Brāhmaṇas completes the ceremony.

*The Āśvayuja ceremony*

Next in order of time comes the Āśvayuja sacrifice offered on the full-moon day of the Āśvayuja month. The chief offerings are a mess of boiled-rice grains with milk (pāyasa i.e. milk-rice) and the Pṛishātaka offering (consisting of a mixture of curds and Ājya or Ājya poured into milk). The pṛishātaka offering is regarded in some sūtras as so important that Gobhila calls this ceremony itself as the Pṛishātaka ceremony and Āśvalāyana and Mānava G. S. turn it into a deity. The deities are different; Indra or Indra and his consort (P). or Paśupati (Ā) or Rudra (Kh. & G) along with the 'Autumn', the Aśvinī full-moon and the Āśva-

yuja Nakshatra. The procedure of the sacrifice is :-He decorates the house, takes a bath and puts on clean garments, (This is mentioned by Ā. only.); milk-rice (or a mess of cooked food Ā.) or milk-rice mixed with curds, honey and ghee are here sacred to one or the other of the deities mentioned above. Then (according to S. and G) 8 Ajya oblations are offered with the names of cows duly invoked and Gobhila tells us the rest should be performed according to the Sthālīpāka rite. The Pṛishātaka sacrifice follows now (S); (according to P after the eating of his portion of the sacrificial food by the performer). According to G. the performer carries the Pṛishātaka mixture round the fire turning his right side towards it and causes the Brāhmaṇas (the inmates of the house also according to P) to look at it and then looks at it himself. Then he entertains the Brāhmaṇas with food and himself also eats. Then the sacrificer and his family should tie to their arms, necks etc, amulets made of lac, together with all sorts of herbs, for the sake of prosperity and then in the evening he feeds the cows with the Pṛishātaka and lets the calves join their mothers. Neither G. nor Kh. who speak of the besprinkling of cows with the Pṛishātaka mention the offering or sacrifice of the Pṛishātaka but it seems to be implied-Gobhila alone mentions the results of this sacrifice "Thus the cows will thrive"; and shows the connection of this ceremony with cattle.

## SECTION B : Śrauta ritual in the Gṛihya-Sūtras.

The H. G. S. mentions a penance for touching a yūpa or yūpas on the way, which shows that the śrauta or grand sacrifices which required the yūpa or sacrificial

post for tying up the victims were common enough. Again it is clear that quite a number of sacrifices were performed from the prescription that the domestic fire (for being set up) should be brought from people who perform many sacrifices ( S.G.S. ). The total number of sacrifices in general is put down as twenty-one as follows:- (S. I. 1. 15) the seven kinds of Pākayajñas (*viz.* the Ashṭakā sacrifices, the sacrifice offered at each Parvan, the śrāddha sacrifice, the śrāvaṇī, the Āgrahāyaṇī, the chaitrī and the Āśvayujī sacrifices.); the seven kinds of Havir-yajñas belonging to the śrauta ritual: the Agnyādheya, the Agnihotra, the sacrifices of the new and the full-moon, the Āgrayaṇa, the chāturmasya sacrifices, the Nirūḍhapaśubandha and the Sautrāmaṇī and the seven kinds of soma sacrifices (of which the ancient texts mention only three or four) *viz.* the Agnishṭoma, Atyagnishṭoma, the Ukthya, the Shoḍaśin, the Atirātra, Aptoryāma and the Vājapeya: also belonging to the Śrauta-ritual. S. tells us that only priests who have received the Arghya reception should officiate at the soma sacrifices. That keeping the śrauta fires was specially meritorious though not compulsory is seen from the rule that if the chariot carrying a married couple breaks on the way, the girl is to be taken to the house of one who keeps the śrauta fires. The Ā.G.S. gives the rules for choosing priests for officiating at a sacrifice (evidently a śrauta one) which shows that the complicated śrauta ritual was existing side by side with the Gṛihya-ritual. Either four chief priests have to be chosen in which case the Brahman is to be chosen first. If all the sixteen (including the 12 hotrakas who officiate at the Ahīna-

sacrifices and at those lasting for one day) are to be chosen, then the Hotṛi is to be chosen first. There are other priests also besides the sixteen, chosen for taking part in the śrauta performances, such as the sadasya prescribed by the kaushītakins, the śamitṛi and the chamasādhvaryus but they have not the rank of ṛitvijs (officiating priests). The inviting is to be done with formulas appropriate to each one of them and to each group of them. The invited priests are to murmur their assent by appropriate formulas and blessings. The functions of an officiating priest are not to be exercised, if abandoned by another priest or at an Ahīna sacrifice, or at a sacrifice with small sacrificial fee or for persons, sick, suffering, affected with consumption, of a bad reputation in their village or of despised extraction. The officiating priests are to eat no flesh, and to observe purity until the completion of the sacrifice, A Madhuparka is to be offered to the Ṛitvijs when they are chosen. We get an almost complete list of the sacrificial implements required in the śrauta ritual in connection with the funeral rites of an Āhitāgni who dies. The sacrificial implements are put on different parts of his body such as the hands etc. The implements are the Juhū (or the spoon) Upabhṛit ( a second spoon), sphya (or the sacrificial sword), the Agnihotra-havaṇī (the ladle with which the Agnihotra oblations are offered) Dhruvā (the big sacrificial ladle), Sruvas (or smaller sacrificial ladles) the Prāśitraharaṇas (the vessels into which the portion of the sacrificial food belonging to the Brahman is put), the Pātrī (a sacrificial vessel); the samavatta-dhāna-chamasa (the cup into which the cut off portions of the sacrificial food are put), Śamyā

(a staff), the two kindling-woods, the mortar and the pestle, the baskets, the mill-stones-upper and lower-and other implements made of copper, iron and earthenware.

### SECTION C : Hints of dissatisfaction with Ritual excesses.

The idea of the Sacrifice had taken such deep root in the minds of the people that all imaginable types of sacrifices were prescribed *e.g.* a sacrifice is offered even outside the fire (as in the description of the distribution of Palāśa leaves which is a part of the Śūlagava or spit-ox sacrifice). There we are told that after cooking a mess of sacrificial food sacred to kshetrapati, a sacrifice is performed to that deity on the path of the cows, *without a fire*, on four or seven palāśa leaves. S. says that the Agnihotra fire, if neglected burns, but the tiresome character of the elaborate ritual sacrifices on different occasions and the necessity of some simple substitutes for them seems to have been recognised when S. lays down that at the last Ashṭakā a cow or a goat is the animal to be sacrificed *or a mess of cooked food* should be offered or he may optionally offer food to a cow or he may merely burn down brush-wood in the forest and say "This is my Ashṭakā" but let him not neglect to do any of these things. That the over-doing of the ritual operations was gradually producing a reaction, is seen from the very opening sūtras of the Āśvalāyana G. S. where it is said 1-2 seq. "There are three kinds of Pākayajñas ; *the 'Hutas'* (*i. e.* the sacrifices offered over the fire) *the 'Prahutas'* (*i. e.* the sacrifices offered over something that is not the fire *e.g.* the Baliharaṇa) and the 'Brahmaṇi-hutas'

(or offered in the Brahman-by the feeding of Brāhmaṇas). And they quote also ṛichas "He who with a piece of wood or an oblation or with knowledge, worships Agni"; "Even he who puts a piece of wood (on the fire) full of faith should think "Here I offer a sacrifice; adoration to that (deity)!" We are further told there that "even by learning only, satisfaction is produced (in the gods)." This amounts practically to a revolt against ritual excesses and expresses a new phase of religious thought *viz.* "Even a Ṛik sung by the poet may stand for cows and oxen etc., that a piece of wood or an oblation or knowledge are all equally good materials for sacrifice provided Śraddhā or faith and sincerity are present. The same notion is responsible for Svādhyāya (or the daily vedic study), the daily Bali offerings to Gods and Bhūtas, the Tarpaṇa and the hospitable reception of a guest (Atithi-Bhojana) etc. being looked upon as sacrifices and enumerated as the Pañcha-mahāyajñas of a house-holder!

## SECTION D : Temples and idols.

It is an ineresting question whether there were temples in those days dedicated to certain deities. A "God's house" is mentioned along with a forest as a place where a student observing the Mahānāmanīvratas etc. is to fast and perhaps this indicates something like a "temple". Of course the idea of a temple *i.e.* a sacred place set apart for purposes of worship and devotion to a deity was there, from the existence of the 'Agnyāgāra' (G. I, 4, 5) or fire-temple inside or outside which, the Bali oblations could be offered. Similarly a temple seems to be indicated when a snātaka is advised to go round

god's houses keeping his right side turned to them if met with on the way. In Śānkhāyana G.S. in the description of the chaitra offerings, there is probably (the Sūtras IV, 19 2 to 3 being obscure) a reference to the images of Nakshatras and the making of a figure with a prominent navel to Indra and Agni and of balls or ball-shaped figures to Rudra. Does this indicate the existence of small idols or images as in the present Devapūjā ? Similarly in Pāraskara there is a reference to the besprinkling of seats and shrines (for the images of gods) in the ceremonies in connection with a newly-built house (III,4,9).

*Small idols ?*

The Chaitya sacrifice (Ā) is important in connection with the question of the existence of temples. Here a bali is to be offered to the Chaitya (?) before the svishṭakrit offering but if the Chaitya is distant, the bali is to be sent through a leaf-messenger (*i.e.* an image or symbol of a messenger ? as the commentator says). We are further told that he makes two lumps (of food), puts them on a carrying-pole, hands them over to the messenger and says to him "Carry this bali to that (Chaitya)". He gives him the lump which is destined for the messenger with the words "This to thee". If the path from the village to the Chaitya is beset with danger, he gives him some weapon also. If a navigable river lies between the village and the Chaitya, he gives him also something like a raft. Now Oldenberg agrees with Prof. Stenzler in assigning to 'Chaitya' the ordinary meaning of a religious shrine and says that the sacrifice was not offered like other sacrifices at the sacrificer's home but that in some cases, the offering would have to be sent, at least, symbolically, to distant places because according to him it is not clear

whether besides this image (the leaf) of a messenger, there was also a real messenger who had to carry the bali to the chaitya or whether the whole rite was purely symbolical. This however, definitely (in my opinion) indicates that there were temples or religious shrines in a village which may be near or distant, the way to which may be dangerous and require the use of a weapon by the messenger who carries the bali to the chaitya or which, may be crossed by a navigable river. This inference regarding the existence of a place sacred to a deity or a temple is strengthened by Pāraskara who in III,11,10 & 11, says that at a sacrifice *directed to a special deity*, he should sacrifice an animal belonging to that deity, should make a portion for that deity and should say to the messenger who is to convey that offering to a place sacred to that deity "Take care that this reaches that god." If there is a river between (the sacrificer and the sacred place) he may have a boat made or he may dispense with this. The explanation given by Nārāyaṇa the commentator of Āśvalāyana of 'chaitya' as 'chitte-bhava' and of the 'chaitya sacrifice' as the sacrifice made by a person to a certain deity saying "If I obtain such and such a desire, I shall offer to thee Ājya sacrifice, a sthālipāka or animal" does not go against this inference either. Again the instruction to descend from a chariot during a journey on reaching images of gods (in P) shows that there were temples in distant places housing images of deities.

## SECTION E: Deities.

It will be relevant here to note the deities mentioned

in the Gṛihya sūtras. The process of personification by which natural phenomena developed into Gods in the Ṛigveda is here long complete and has extended itself in the deification of all objects worthy of adoration and the personification of all abstract qualities worthy of cultivation such as yajā, śamā, and bhūti. Thus the deities mentioned by S. in the Tarpaṇa are Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya, Vishṇu, Prajāpati, Virūpāksha, Sahasrāksha, Soma, Brahman, the vedas, gods, the ṛishis, the metres, om, vashaṭ, the mahāvyāhṛitis, the Sāvitrī, the Yajñas, heaven and earth, the Nakshatras, the air, days and nights, the sāṅkhyas, the numbers, the twilights, the oceans, the rivers, the mountains, the fields, herbs, trees, *demigods* like the siddhas, the sādhyas, the vipras, the Yakshas and the Rākshasas. Ā. adds birds, and cows to the list. Deification of abstractions like Śruti, smṛiti, firmness, delight, success, thought, belief, insight, memory, etc, are, of course, pretty common. The deities of the daily oblation in Āśvalāyana are soma, Vanaspati, Agnī-shomau, Indrāgni, Dhanvantaṛi, varuṇa, yama, and yama's men. If there is no specific mention of the deities in a sacrifice, then it is to be offered to Agni, Indra, Prajāpati, the viśvedavas, and Brahman; this points out the more important of the divinities. It is evident from this that there was no limit to the number of deities and that the principle underlying this was "यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्वं" mentioned in the Gitā. In the Āśvayuja ceremony on the full-moon day of Āśvina according to Ā. G. S., a mess of cooked food is offered to Paśupati and sacrificed with the formula "To Paśupati, to Śiva, to Śaṁkara, to Pṛishātaka, Svāhā" and here we find the

later names of Śiva. Similarly in the description of the Śūlagava sacrifice, Āśvalāyana mentions Hara, Indra, Śiva, Bhava, Mahādeva, Ugra, Bhīma, Paśupati, Rudra, Śaṅkara and Īśāna as deities to whom the omentum of the animal killed is sacrificed. P. also in the Śūlagava description, says that the cut-off portions are offered to Agni, Rudra, Śarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Aśani, Bhava, Mahādeva, and Īśāna and the Patnī-saṁyāja offerings to Indrāṇī, Rudrāṇī, Śarvāṇī, Bhavānī and Agni Gṛihapati. Here we not only get all the later names of Rudra but also of his consort. There is a difference of opinion in the Gṛihya-sūtras as to the deity to whom the Ashṭakās are sacred. The deity or deities mentioned in this connection are the Viśvedevas, Prajāpati, the fathers, Indra, Agni, the sun, the night, the fire, the nakshatra or the seasons. Although such a variety of deities is mentioned, so far as prayerful worship, devotional ritual, or adoration goes, the sun-god comes next in importance to the fire-god.

*The chief deities.*

*The Sun.*
*The Sandhyā adoration*

The importance of the teaching of Sāvitrī, a hymn to the sun in different metres (suited to the three different castes)-Gāyatrī for a Brahmin Trishṭubh for a Kshatriya, Jagatī for a Vaiśya), has already been noted in the Upanayana ritual in the chapter on Education. Other rites such as sūryadarśana in the 'case of the infant, point in the same direction. But the sandhyā adoration prescribed in the morning and evening for every twice-born person after Initiation is important in this connection as it is devoted to the sun. In the forest ( S.G.S. ) i. e. out side the village as a rule, with a piece of wood in his

hand, invested with the sacrificial cord, he performs the twilight-devotion observing silence, turning his face to the north-west, in the evening from the time when the sun is half-set until the stars appear, murmuring the Mahāvyāhṛitis, the Sāvitrī and the auspicious hymns and the same way in the morning with his face turned towards the east until the sun's disc appears. When the sun has risen, his daily study begins. Indra is the next important deity as the Chaitra offering at the spring-festival appears to be principally in his honour; a figure with a prominent navel being made to the God. Indra again is sacrificed to, on the full moon day of Praushṭhapada; the chief oblation viz. milk-rice is offered to Indra and Indrāṇī, his consort receives an Ājya oblation and his allies, the Maruts receive a Bali offering on Aśvattha leaves. The Aja Ekapād (the one-footed goat) and Ahi Budhnya, the serpent of the deep and the other deities sharing the minor honours of the offering are also reminiscent of the Vedic Indra-Vṛitra legend.

*Indra.*

## Chapter XIX.

### The Ritual of the dead.

Part 1[1]. The ṚV. Period.

*Heaven.*

*Yama.*

*And Yamī.*

*Hell?*

Heaven is the place or home (ṚV X, 14,8) of the dead. In this heaven there is light, every form of happiness, wish-cows yielding all desires as also 'Svadhā' which is at once the food of the spirits, and the power which they win by it, viz. their self-determination. The spirits of the dead are material enough to enjoy the most material things such as soma, milk, honey and surā, as also the sound of singing and the flute. ṚV. X, 135,1, speaks of a fig-tree where Yama drinks with the Gods. Yama was the first of the mortals who died and found out the way for many to the realm where he reigns;—death is his path. He and Yamī his sister, are the primeval twins (X,10). He however rejects on moral grounds the advances of his sister to commit incest with him for the creation of the race. The dead obtain in heaven not only long life by the mercy of the Gods but also the merit of the Ishṭāpūrta performed by them on earth. There is a reference to a place of punishment for evil-doers, of a place of deep darkness. The distinction between the *recently*

1. Mainly a summary from H.O.S. Vol. 32, Pp. 403 to 432.

dead, the 'Freta's hovering on earth and the *'pitṛis'* par excellence in heaven implied in The Śrāddha ritual of the G. S. is not found in the ṚV. There is in X. 15. 2. a reference to Fathers who sit in the regions of the earth, or in the dwellings of men, but this does not denote belief in the soul as a ghost, coming to visit men but refers to the visit of the Fathers to receive funeral offerings on earth.

*Classes of the Departed Ones*

X. 16,3, speaks of the soul of a dead man becoming a plant or passing into a plant. But whether the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul exists in the ṚV. is a hotly-debated question. There is less disagreement on the view that a doctrine like that of transmigration was probably implicit in the ṚV. or at any rate in the early Brāhmaṇa speculation.

*Transmigration.*

Cremation as well as burial were both methods of disposing of the dead. The Agnidagdhas (burnt) and the Anagnidagdhas (unburnt) both went to heaven (X.15,4.). Besides in X,18. the dead is asked to go to mother earth which is to enclose him as 'a mother her child with a garment'. The later ritual which had given up burial for burning interprets the above as refering to the *burial of the bones*. In the ṚV. at least both the practices were contemporary, though *cremation was more popular*. Some of the details of the

*Disposal of the dead.*

*The details of the cremation.*

burning are the following:-The dead one was urged during the funeral procession to go on his long way to unite with the fathers and with Yama; to leave sin behind etc. The wife of the dead man was asked to lie down by the side of the dead body placed on the funeral pyre and then called away with X.18,8, "Arise O woman to the world of the living." The bow is taken away from the hand of the dead if he be a Kshatriya; a staff, if a Brāhmaṇa etc. Cow's flesh is laid on the dead body limb by limb, to protect it from the fire and a goat is burnt along with the body as sacred to Agni. When the pyre is lighted, prayers to Agni, Yama and others are recited. The place of the burning is cooled by the use of water-plants such as kiyāmbu. On the 3rd or 10th day, the collection of the bones is made and they are buried in an urn. Offerings to the fathers (corresponding to the later Śrāddhas) are referred to in X.15.6.

## PART 2. THE LATER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

*Heaven.*

The later Saṁhitās elaborate the description of heaven given in the Ṛ̣V. but its characteristics are all the same. The AV. tells us how the dead man is borne up by the Maruts with gentle breezes fanning him until he recovers his complete body and meets with the Fathers who dwell with Yama. In the AV. is found the idea that the dead are nourished in heaven by the

*The germ of the 'Śrāddha' idea*

piety of the relatives on earth. Such nourishment may either be buried with them in which case the grains of corn and sesame so buried will become wish-cows and their calves in heaven or may be conveyed by the later offerings. The AV. develops the idea of hell (Naraka-Loka) in contrast to Svarga, as a place of female goblins, and as the lowest darkness. The AV. the Śatapatha, the Jaiminīya and Kaushītaki Brāhmaṇas speak in different ways of the horrors of hell. The idea of punishment or reward according to one's deed is constantly expressed in the Śatapatha Br. There is ample evidence of the connection of the spirits with the earth, particularly in the ritual of the dead, which is described scantily though in the Brāhmaṇas. The newly-departed or Preta does not enter the company of the ancient fathers until after one year. The doctrine of transmigration is most unambiguosly referred to in the Bṛihad-āraṇyaka Up, though there are some dubious allusions to it in the Śatapatha.

*Hell.*

Though burning was the most popular method of disposal, burial is mentioned side by side. Other modes of disposal are referred to in the AV. The dead might be cast away (Paroptāḥ) or they might be exposed (Uddhitāḥ) very probably on trees as in the Śatapatha.

*The Disposal of the dead.*

In the moment of death, the man was laid on the

the ground which is smeared with cow-dung and strewn with grass near his sacred fire. The dead was then washed and anointed. The hair, the beard and the nails were closely trimmed; a garland and a new garment were laid upon him. The women of the house lamented around the place on which he was laid, tearing or loosening their hair. The body was then borne to the cremation ground or taken there in a car. The mourners accompanied the bier with loosened hair; the tracks of the whole party were to be wiped off by twigs attached to the bier. The dead was then laid on the funeral pyre. Then the wife is placed beside him and asked to arise almost immediately. Afterwards the offering-utensils of the dead are placed on the bier with him only the stone (earthen or metal) being kept by the son of the dead one or thrown into water. The pyre is then lighted or the three fires are directed towards it. After the ceremony of burning the body, the mourners depart without turning round. They wash themselves and offer libations of water for the dead, change their garments and on entering the house, touch purifying things such as fire, water, etc. The bones are collected on the third or tenth day till which time the relatives observe certain restrictions. They sleep on the ground, cook no food but live on what they buy and observe chastity. The Śatapatha Br. mentions another ceremony-the raising of a memorial to the dead a long time after death in the shape of a mound of earth and stone created over the bones if they are found or

*Details of death and cremation.*

*A memorial to the Dead.*

over dust taken from the place where they were buried. In addition to the normal rites. special forms are prescribed for many cases, such as the death of an Agnihotrin etc.

## PART 3.–THE GṚIHYA SŪTRAS.

### SECTION A. The ancestral offerings.

*The two concepts of the Fathers.*

We must now distinguish clearly between two concepts of the Fathers, the one comprising the distant, half-forgotton and almost mythical ancestors, the Pitṛis and the other consisting of the Fathers who have but lately departed and who are still as it were personally remembered and revered: the Pretas. The Gṛihya-Sūtra-Śrāddha ceremonies embody both these concepts. The first concept for example, finds expression in the Pitṛiyajña (a daily sacrifice) and the monthly Śrāddha and in the constant mention of Pitṛis as worthy of oblations along with other deities in the rites of the Ashṭakās and the Anvashṭakya which are thus *ancestral ceremonies* in a way. The second concept is embodied in the funeral ritual following immediately after death, and in the Ekoddishṭa and Sapiṇḍīkaraṇa Śrāddhas etc. which have an occasional character and which may be called 'Funeral' as distinguished from the 'Ancestral' ceremonies. In one respect these funeral ceremonies may represent an earlier phase of worship than the daily and monthly ancestral sacrifices etc. They lead up to them, and as it were, prepare the departed ones for their future dignity as Pitṛis or Ancestors. On the other hand,

the conception of Ancestors in general must have existed before any departed person could have been raised to that rank. We therefore describe the Ancestral sacrifices first and next the Funeral ceremonies.

*The daily Pitṛi-Yajñas*

The daily Pitṛi-Yajña or ancestral sacrifice which is classed among the five great sacrifices or Pañcha Mahāyajñas is an offering to the Pitṛis, first claiming our attention in this respect. It has however been described already in the chapter on 'Religion'. Next comes the Monthly Śrāddha, which is the principal form of an ancestral offering called also Pārvaṇa Śrāddha (performed on the Parvan of the New-Moon) though other times also are considered as admirsible for its performance. According to the Gobhila Gṛihya-Sūtra, this Pārvaṇa Śrāddha is identical with the 'Anvāhārya' which is called the 'Itarat'='Another' offered after the Piṇḍa-Pitṛiyajña which belongs really to the domain of the Śrauta ritual. Dr. Keith (H.O.S. Vol. 32, P. 427) holds that 'the Māsika (or monthly) offering brought on the waning half of the month, on an uneven day, is distinct from the monthly Pārvaṇa Śrāddha. The rites for this day are varyingly given and in some cases the rites seem to have been assimilated to the Ashṭakā rites'. It may be pointed out in support of this that this Māsika Śrāddha seems to have been assimilated to the Anvashṭakya rite in some Gṛihya-Sūtras and to the Ashṭakā rites in others (e. g. Baudhāyana). But the Ā.G.S. by mentioning the Pārvaṇas

*The māsika (or pārvaṇa) Śraddha*

separately seems to support Dr. Keith's view about the different character of the Māsika and the Pārvaṇa Śrāddhas. The other G. S. do not make a clear distinction e. g. S. simply speaks of Śrāddha oblations offered every month. H.G.S. says "The monthly (Śrāddha) is performed on the new-moon day or on days with an odd number in the dark fortnight" and ĀP. lays down the option of different days in the second fortnight for the monthly Śrāddha. We now proceed to describe the Māsika Śrāddha (and virtually the Pārvaṇa whether or not it is a different offering).

*The description of the ritual.*

We follow the description as given in the Hiraṇyakeśin G. S. On the new moon day in the after-noon or on days with an odd number in the dark fortnight, the monthly or Pārvaṇa Śrāddha which is the most important and regular Śrāddha is performed. Having prepared food for the Fathers and having arranged southward-pointed Darbha grass as seats for the Brahmins whom he is going to invite, he invites an odd number of pure Brahmins who are versed in the Mantras, with no deficient limbs, who are not connected with himself by blood-relationship or by their Gotra or by the Mantras (*i.e.* are not his teachers or pupils). In feeding them, he should not try to serve any worldly purpose. Having put wood on the fire and spread south-ward pointed and east-ward pointed Darbha grass around it, having prepared the Ājya in an ājya-pot over which he has laid one purifier, having sprinkled water round (the fire) from right to left, and put a piece of Udumbara wood on the fire, he sacrifices with the spoon called Darvī, which is

made of Udumbara wood. Having performed the rites down to the Ājyabhāga offerings, he suspends his sacrificial cord over his right shoulder and calls his Fathers etc. He sprinkles Water in the south with a verse addressed to the waters. (Comp. Atharva-Veda XVIII 4,40). Having performed the rites down to the Vyāhṛti oblations with his sacrificial cord over his left shoulder, he suspends it over his right shoulder and sacrifices with the Mantras like "I interpose another one between myself and my father, grand-father, and great grand-father" etc; then he sacrifices with their names thrice. "To so and so! Svadhā!; wherein my mother, (grand-mother etc.) has gone wrong...may my father (grand-father etc. respectively) take that sperm as his own". Then he sacrifices with the verse "ṚV.X.15.13." and a second and third time with the substitution of the words "The grand-father" etc. in the place of "पितर:". In the same way he sacrifices other food. Then he sacrifices the Svishṭakṛit oblation with the formula "To Agni Havya-vāhana Svāhā!" etc. He then touches the food with the formula: "The earth is the vessel; heaven is the lid". He then causes the Brahmins to touch (*i.e.* taste of) the food with the words "I establish myself in the breath and sacrifice and ambrosia." While they are eating, he looks at them with the words "My soul dwells in the Brahman so that it may be immortal". When they have eaten (and are going away), he goes after them and asks for their permission to take the remains of their meals for the rites to be performed next.

*Offering of piṇḍas.*

He takes a water-pot and a handful of Darbha grass, goes out to a place that lies in a some-

what south-easterly direction; spreads the Darbha grass with its points towards the south, and pours out on that grass three handfuls of water with the formulas "May the Fathers (Grand-father etc.) wipe themselves or "so and so! wash thyself!" etc. On that grass, he puts down the lumps of food for the Fathers, each lump with the appropriate address "This to thee! Father! (grand-fater etc.)". Silently a fourth lump is optionally given. If he does not know the names of the ancestors, then he gives the lumps to his Fathers and (Grand-fathers and Great-grand fathers) etc. with the words "Svadhā to the fathers who dwell on the earth (in air and in heaven respectively)!" Then he gives, corresponding to each lump, collyrium and other salve and something that represents a garment, saying three times in the case of the collyriums and salves "Anoint thy eyes, so and so!" etc. With the formula "These garments are for you, O, Father! Do not take anything else that is ours", he tears off a skirt (of his garment) or a flake of wool and puts that down (for the Fathers), if he is in the first half of his life (*i.e.* under 50 years of age). He tears out some hair from his body, if he is in the second half. Then he washes the vessel (in which the food of which he has offered the lumps was kept) and sprinkles the water with which he has washed it from right to left round the Piṇḍas with a Mantra. Then he turns the vessel over, crosses his hands so that the left hand becomes right and right hand becomes left and worships the Fathers. Then he goes to the brink of some water and pours down three handfuls of water with the mantras, "This is for thee, O Father (Grand-father etc.)! The Ṛichas (Yajus, sāmans),

etc. respectively) are thy might". Returning from the place where he has performed the Piṇḍa offering, he puts down the substance sticking to the Sthālī into the water-pot and pours it with a verse meaning "Depart, O Father! on your hidden ancient paths."

*The Ashṭakās. Their number & time.*

Generally, three Ashṭakās are mentioned: that (*i. e.* the eighth day) following the full-moon of Mārgaśirsha and the two 8th days following the full-moon of the two following months but S. mentions a similar ceremony in the middle of the rainy season on the 'Māgha day' *i. e.* a day under the Maghā Nakshatra. Ā. mentions four, adding one in the Phālguna month but gives the option of celebrating one only (that in the month of Māgha) called the Ekāshṭakā and in addition the one on the "Māgha day" which falls in the dark fortnight after the full-moon of Praushṭhapada; [according to the Vishṇu-smṛiti, it falls on the 13th day of that month and Manu III, 273, "Varshāsu cha Maghāsu cha" seems to refer to the same] H. & P. speak of one only;-that in the month of Māgha called Ekāshṭakā.

*The deities.*

The deities presiding over the Ashṭakās are different and even the G. S. (e.g. Ā. & G.) are aware of this difference. Viśvedevas, Agni, the sun, Prajāpati, the Nakshatras, the seasons and the Night are the deities (Ā. S.). P. has two different deities, Indra and the Fathers. Kh. has the "Ashṭakā" itself as the deity.

The house-holder has the option of celebrating one

Ashṭakā festival only (Ā.) and H. & Ā. in fact describe one Ashṭakā festival only. But according to the G. S. that describe the performance of the three separately, the distinguishing features of the three commonly accepted are the following:—The sacrifice of a cow or an animal (goat) is a feature of the middle Ashṭakā in the Māgha month called the Ekāshṭakā or "The One Ashṭakā". A mess of cooked food of course accompanies the animal sacrifice, the most important element of the festival. G. quotes Kautsa in this connection. "These all he should endeavour to celebrate with meat-offerings even if he be deficient in wealth." Though the meat-offering is thus the most important one, substitutes are also recommended. If a cow or goat cannot be offered, then a mess of cooked food or a Sthālīpāka only will do or food may be given to a cow or an ox and he may burn down brush-wood in the forest and say "This is my Ashṭakā". Sacrificing curds with his joined hands in the same way as the cake is the optional method pointed out by Āp. As regards the first and third Ashṭakās, cakes and vegetables constitute the essential offerings in the two (P. & Kh.).

*Common features of the three or four Ashṭakās.*

According to S. the simplest way is to sacrifice vegetables and then to offer the oblation to Agni Svishṭakṛit. G. & P. give more details. Apūpas or cakes are a speciality of this Ashṭakā; Gobhila in fact gives the name of this Ashṭakā as the "Apūpāshṭakā". Grains prepared in the way prescribed for Sthālīpākas, are then cooked

*The first Ashṭakā.*

and thus a charu is prepared. Next he prepares eight cakes of the size of the cakes sacred to Tryambaka without turning them over in the dish (in which he bakes them), each in one dish with or without Mantras. After baking them, he should pour Ājya on them, should take them off the fire towards the north and pour Ājya on them again. Then he cuts off the prescribed portions in the manner of the Sthālīpākas, from the mess of boiled grains and from the cakes and sacrifices them with the words "To the Ashṭakā Svāhā!" The rest should be performed according to the Sthālīpāka rite [i. e. the Svishṭakṛit oblation is offered with the Upastaraṇa (spreading under) and Abhighāraṇa (sprinkling over) etc. after the Ājya oblations.]

*The third Ashṭakā.*

The third Ashṭakā has hardly any peculiarity about it. Vegetables are here sacrificed (cakes according to S.). So we now turn to the details of the middle and the most important Ashṭakā.

*The second i. e. the Middle Ashṭakā or Ekāshṭakā.*

The sacrifice of a cow i.e. and animal sacrifice is the most important part of it and as it has already been described in detail (in the chapter on Religion) repetition would be saved if we follow the Gṛihya-sūtra *e. g.* the Ā. which takes a knowledge of the description of animal sacrifice for granted in its description of the middle Ashṭakā festival. The day before (the eighth-day) he should offer to the Fathers (*i. e.* the Manes) boiled rice, boiled rice together with sesammum seeds, rice-milk or cakes made of four Śarāvas of ground grain, sacrificing with the eight verses (ṚV.X.15. seq.) or with as many verses as he likes. Then on the next day the Ashṭakā is celebrated with an animal sacrifice and

with a mess of cooked food. After the drawing out and sacrificing of the omentum, follow oblations of avadānas with the two verses (ṚV. 1,189,1, seq.) and other oblations with the texts (ṚV. X. 121. 10. etc.). The eighth oblation is that to Agni Svishṭakṛit. Then he should feed the Brāhmaṇas. As pointed out by Keith (H. O. S. Vol. 32 p. 428) the Mānava Gṛihya S. prescribes a very odd rite for the evening before the last Ashṭakā:-the sacrificer gets a cow killed at the cross-roads, dismembers it and divides the flesh among the passers-by. Then another cow is killed on the next day and her omentum sacrificed as described above.

*The Anvashṭakya rite.*

The Anvashṭakya rite follows the Ashṭakā rite (i. e. either all the three Ashṭakas or the middle one). We follow the description given by Gobhila because it is the most detailed one and is so typical as to cover all the features of the Srāddha offerings to the Fathers. On the following day (i.e. after the Ashṭakā ceremony) or on the day which follows after that, the Anvashṭakya ceremony is performed.

*The special enclosure.*

To the south-east of the house-they partition off, a place with mats or the like, extending length-wise in the south-eastern direction because all ceremonies are to be performed thereupon facing the same direction. The place should measure four Prakramas or paces at least and should have an entrance from the west. In the northern part of that enclosure, they prepare the ground on which the fire shall be established by draw-

*Preparation of the two messes: one of rice and another of flesh.*

ing the five lines etc. and carry the fire to it. A mortar is firmly established to the west of the fire and therein the performer of the ceremony husks one handful of rice grains which he has seized with one grasp, holding his left hand upper-most. When the rice has been husked, he should carefully remove the husks. Then he cuts off a lump of flesh from the left thigh of the cow (sacrificed at the second Ashṭakā when the avadāna portions are cut off from all its limbs with the exception of the left thigh which is left over for the Anvashtakya ceremony) and should cut it into small pieces because the Piṇḍas to be offered to the Manes must be mixed up with flesh. Therefore he cooks one mess of rice-grains and one of meat, stirring up the one and the other separately, from right to left with the two pot-ladles.

*The pits.*

After cooking them, Ājya should be poured on them and they should be taken from the fire towards the south, no more ājya being poured again. Then three pits are dug in the southern part of the enclosure, the eastern pit being dug first, each pit being one span in length and four inches in breadth and depth. The lakshaṇa (or ground specially prepared for the establishment of the fire by drawing lines etc.) is then made to the east of the eastern pit and the fire being conducted round the pits on their west side is placed on it. He then spreads one handful of Darbha grass cut off in one portion, round the fire and into the pits, beginning with the eastern one. He next spreads

out a layer of southward-pointed Kuśa grass inclined towards the south, to the west of the pit and puts a mat on it. Then the following sacrificial implements are fetched for him one by one and deposited by the side of that layer of grass from right to left, the implements *viz.* the two pots in which the two messes were cooked, the two pot-ladles (used for stirring), one brazen vessel, one Darvī, and water. The sacrificer's wife places a stone on the Barhis and pounds on that stone the fragrant substance called Sthagara and grinds some collyrium on the same stone and anoints therewith three Darbha blades. He gets some oil made from sesamum seeds and a piece of linen tape. After he has invited an odd number of virtuous Brahmins representing the Father, Grand-father etc. to sit down on a pure spot with their faces turned towards the north and has given them Darbha grass to sit on, he gives them one by one pure water and afterwards sesamum-water (*i.e.* water into which sesamum seeds have been thrown), pronouncing his father's name, "To thee, this sesamum water! To thee, svadhā!" He then touches water and does the same for the Grand-father and the Great-grand-father. (Ā. says that this sesamum water poured into three vessels, of metal, stone and earthen-ware, for the three Fathers, is the Arghya water IV, 7, 11 to 16). In the same way he gives them (the Fathers represented by the Brahmins) perfumes (garlands, incense, lights and clothes: Ā.). He then takes the formal permission of the Brahmins to offer

*The implements and the necessary substances.*

*The gifts of ordinary water, Arghya (i. e. sesamum) water, perfumes etc. to the Fathers (Brahmins).*

*The sacrifice.*

a sacrifice; cuts off the prescribed portions from the two messes of cooked food (rice and meat), puts them into a brass vessel and sacrifices, picking out portions of the Havis with the pot-ladle the first with the words "Svāhā to Soma Pitṛimat" and the second with "Svāhā to Agni Havya-Vāhana!" in the fire or in the hands of the Brahmins. From this point onwards he becomes a Prāchīnāvitin (wearing the sacrificial cord over the right shoulder) and observes silence. With a Darbha blade seized with his left hand he draws in the middle of the three pits, a line from north to south with the formula MB. II. 3.3 and seizing a fire-brand with the same hand, he should place it on the south side of the pits with the next verse. With the 5th verse, he calls the Fathers to his sacrifice and then places vessels of water near the pits. He seizes with his left hand the first vessel, pours it out from right to left on the Darbha grass in the eastern pit, and pronouncing his father's name, says "wash thyself" etc. After touching water, he does the same for the other two. Seizing the Darvī next, with his left hand, he cuts off one third of the mixture of the different kinds of sacrificial food and should put down that Piṇḍa from right to left on the Darbha grass in the eastern pit, following the same procedure as above. When he has put down the three Piṇḍas he, says "Here O Fathers! enjoy yourselves" etc. He should turn away holding his breath; turning back before emitting his breath he mutters, "The Fathers have enjoyed themselves". He next seizes a Darbha blade anointed with collyrium and puts it down on the Piṇḍa in the eastern pit, pronouncing his father's name. Then touching the water he does the same for

the other two. In the same way he offers oil and perfumes and the linen thread (representing a garment). Seizing with his left hand the vessel of water, he should sprinkle water round the Piṇḍas from right to left. The middle Piṇḍa may be eaten by the sacrificer's wife if she is desirious of a son or by one among the Brāhmaṇas who receives the remnant of the sacrificial food. Having besprinkled and thus extinguished the fire-brand with water, the sacrificer should besprinkle the sacrificial vessels and should have them taken back, two by two. The Piṇḍas should be thrown into water, or into the fire which is carried forward to the east side of the eastern pit, or should be given to a Brāhmaṇa to eat or to a cow.

This description of the Anvashṭakya rite is almost similar to that of the monthly Śrāddha and the two must be regarded as together furnishing a complete picture of the Śrāddha ceremony.

SECTION B : The funeral offerings.

The Ekoddishṭa and Sapiṇḍīkaraṇa śrāddhas etc. offered to the Fathers but lately departed come in next for description but the manner of disposal of the dead and other funeral ceremonies of which these Śrāddhas from part must be described first. It is chiefly in the Pāraskara Gṛihya-sūtra that we meet with a connected account of these ceremonies.

*Burial for an infant*

If a child under two years of age dies, the dead body is buried and not burnt, and the father and the mother only become impure–the period of impurity being one night or three nights and no water-libations are offered. If the child is only a few

days old at the time of death and dies within the period of the mother's impurity due to its birth then the impurity of death lasts just as long as that of birth *i.e.* till the mother's getting up from child-bed. If the child is more than two years old at death, all sapiṇḍa relatives should follow the corpse to the Śmaśāna (singing the Yamagāthā and muttering the Yamasūkta according to some Āchāryas) and burn it. If death comes after Initiation, then the funeral rites from the selection of the burning ground to the entering of a standing pool of water are the same as those for persons who have set up the Śrauta fires, with this difference that the corpse of the Āhitāgni is burnt with his Śālāgni (sacred fire) with mantras, whereas others are burnt silently.

We therefore describe the funeral rites on the death of an Āhitāgni (as given in Ā. IV, 1, 6 to IV, 4, 8). In the south-east or south-west of the village a piece of ground should be dug up at a place inclined towards the south or the south-east (or south-west according to others) having the length of a man with raised hands, the breadth of a Vyāma (fathom) and the depth of one Vitasti (span) (I differ from Oldenberg who thinks, this is the Śmaśāna where the gathered bones will be deposited and is to be distinguished from the Śmaśāna where the body is to be burnt and which will be described now). The Śmaśāna should be open on all sides and fertile in herbs (though plants with milky

*The funeral rites for an Āhitāgni (he who has set up the Śrauta fires).*

*Selection of the śmaśāna.*

juice and thorns are to be weeded out from it). The waters must flow off from it to all sides.

*The funeral procession.*

The hair, the beard and the nails are then cut off from the dead body. The funeral procession is then formed:-the relations of the dead person carrying his sacred fires and his sacrificial vessels go in front and are followed by an odd number of aged persons (men and women walking in separate groups) carrying the dead body. According to some, the *body may be carried in a cart* with a seat, drawn by cows. Behind the dead body, is led a she-animal for covering the dead body with its limbs (which is either a cow, or a she-goat, of one uniform colour which may be black) with a rope tied to its left fore-foot. Then follow the relations of the dead person, wearing their sacrificial cords below *i. e.* round their body, with loosened hair, the older ones first, the younger ones last.

*The funeral pyre.*

On arrival at the Śmaśāna, the performer of the rites walks three times round the Śmaśāna-spot, with his left side turned towards it and with a Śamī branch sprinkles water on it with the verse ṚV.X,14,9. On the elevated corner to the south-east he places the Āhavanīya fire; to the north-west, the Gārhapatya fire and to the south-west, the Dakshiṇa fire. Then between the fires, is arranged a pile of fuel by a person who knows how to do it. Over that is spread sacrificial grass (a stock of which is brought with the funeral party) and a black antelope's skin with the hair outside and thereon is then placed the dead body which is conducted to the pile so as to

pass by the Gārhapatya fire on its north side, turning its head towards the Āhavanīya. The wife of the deceased is then made to lie down on the pile to the north of the body [and a bow is placed by the pile arranged for a Kshatriya]. Her brother-in-law representing the husband (or some other representative of the husband) or a pupil of her husband or an old servant, who may be a Vṛishala, should then make her rise from that place with the verse ṚV.X. 18, 8 (and with the next verse is taken away the bow). The two verses are recited by the performer of the rites if a śūdra servant performs these two acts. (The bow is then bent, broken into pieces and thrown on the pile). Then the sacrificial implements 14 in number beginning with the Juhū are put on the dead body in a definite order, on 14 parts of the body such as the two hands etc. beginning with the right hand. Such implements as have a hollow into which liquids can be poured are filled with a mixture of clarified butter and curds. The lower and the upper mill-stones and implements of copper, iron and earthen-ware are taken by the son of the deceased Āhitāgni for himself.

*The disposal of the sacrificial implements.*

*Covering the dead body with the parts of the Anustaraṇī animal.*

Then the she-animal is killed and the head and the mouth of the dead person are covered with the omentum of that animal with the verse ṚV.X. 16.7. He should lay the kidneys into the hands of the dead body with ṚV.X. 14.10; the right kidney into the right and the left into the left. The heart of the animal is put on the heart of the deceased. Two lumps of flour or rice are also put into the hands (This is done accor-

ding to some if there are no kidneys *i.e.* no Anustaraṇī animal, which is optional). The limbs of the animal killed are placed on the corresponding limbs of the deceased and the dead body is covered with its hide. Then, as the Praṇīta water is carried forward, ṚV.X.16,8 is recited. With the left knee bent, he sacrifices four ājya oblations into the Dakshiṇa fire, to Agni, Kāma etc. and a fifth one on the chest of the deceased.

*Setting the funeral pyre on fire.*

Then he gives the order for kindling the fires into a blaze simultaneously. According as the Āhavanīya, Gārhapatya or Dakshiṇa fire reaches the body first, the deceased will secure happiness in the worlds of 'heaven, air and men' respectively but the highest luck is indicated when all the fires reach him in the same moment. While the body is burning, he recites twenty-four verses from the ṚV. hymns X,14,16,17,18,154. Thus the deceased reaches heaven together with the smoke of the funeral pyre, emerging, it is supposed, from *a knee-deep pit* dug to the north-east of the Āhavanīya fire into which the Avakā-water-plant has been put. Then when he has recited the verses ṚV. X. 18,3ff, they all turn round from right to left and go away without looking back. When they have come to a standing pool of water, the samānodakas (*i.e.* those whose relationship extends to the 14th degree) formally request those related to the deceased by blood or marriage for permission to offer water libations. The formal response to this request is "Do so now but never again here after" if the deceased was under hundred years of age at death and only "Do so" if he was hundred years or more of age at death. All sapiṇḍas (relations

upto the 7th degree) and all co-residents of the village that retain some memory of relationship with the deceased, then descend into the water, keeping only one garment and with the sacred thread suspended over the right shoulder. With the fourth finger of the left hand, they stir up the water with the verse (Vāj. Saṁhitā XXXV, 6). Facing the south, they plunge into the water. Then a libation of water is offered on a pure spot on the bank with joined hands to the deceased saying, "This water to thee!" pronouncing the Gotra name and proper name of the dead. Then they come out of the water, put on their other garments, wring out the wet ones, lay them away with their fringes to the north drying and sit down on a pure spot covered with grass and there, their friends should try to beguile their sorrow by stories about the dead or philosophical talk in general. Then the Sapiṇḍas go back to the village walking in a row and without looking back, with the youngest in front. Those sapiṇḍas, however, who have touched the body in carrying it during day, should not enter the village until the stars appear and if the they have carried it at night, until the sun rises. In the village, standing at the door of the house of the deceased, they chew nimba leaves, sip water, touch water, Agni, cowdung, white mustard seeds (or fried barley and sesamum seeds) and oil, tread upon a stone and then enter house. For three days (and nights) they should remain chaste, sleep on the ground, not do any work themselves or get it done by others. As for food, they should either *buy it* or content themselves with whatever they receive without asking for it and eat by day only, avoiding meat. Before eating, they

should offer a piṇḍa pronouncing the name of the deceased. That night they pour milk and water in an earthen vessel, keep it in the open and say "preta ! bathe here !"

*Periods of the impurity due to death.*

The impurity due to death lasts for *three-days*, on the death of non-sapiṇḍa relations, married female relations, or of a child that has no teeth or a still-born child and *ten days* on the death of sapiṇḍas, a non-sapiṇḍa guru (and unmarried female relations according to others). During this period of impurity they should not perform the Svādhyāya recitation (or teaching); whether the obligatory domestic ritual should be suspended or not-about this, there is a difference of opinion but the Śrauta ritual must go on and the domestic ritual may be performed by others, on his behalf. The impurity for those who have carried the dead body is a fortnight or two (according to the commentators, this refers to Vaiśyas and Śūdras respectively, three or ten days being mentioned above for a Brahmin and 12 days for a Kshatriya). On the death of a fellow-pupil or a śrotriya of the same village, the impurity is for one day. These same rites should be performed when the Āchārya dies or on the death of the maternal grand-father or grand-mother or unmarried females. For dead married females, these rites are to be performed by the husband and his relations and in case of the death of any of the latter the married female performs them for the dead one. If a person dies while out on a journey, his relatives shall sit (i. e. remain inactive) from the time they hear of the death, performing water-libations etc.

until the expiry of the Impurity period. If they hear of the death after the expiry of that period, then one night or three nights is the period of impurity. For a Ṛitvik, father-in-law or mother-in-law, friends, relations (like son-in-law), maternal uncle or sister's son or for married females, the Udakadāna is optional. On the 11th day, he should give to an uneven number of Brāhmaṇas, food with meat: according to some, a cow also is killed in honour of the 'Preta'.

*The 11th day.*

The gathering of the bones is performed after the tenth (Tithi from the death), on a tithi with an odd number of the dark fortnight, under a single Nakshatra. A dead man's bones are gathered and put into a 'male' urn (i. e. one without special marks) and a dead woman's bones, into a 'female' urn (i.e. one with protuberances like female breasts). Aged persons (*not* men and women together) gather the bones. The performer of the ceremony walks three times round the spot, with his left side turned towards it and sprinkles on it with a śami branch, milk mixed with water, with the verse ṚV. X.16.14. With the thumb and the fourth finger, they should put each single bone into the urn without making a noise, picking the bones of the feet first, of the head last. Having gathered them carefully and purified them with a winnowing basket, they should put the urn into a pit, at a place where waters except 'rain-

*The gathering of the bones.*

*Putting them into an urn.*

*The burial of the urn.*

water' from the different sides do not flow together with the Verse ṚV.X,18,10. With the following verse, he should throw earth into the pit, and repeat the following verse, after he has completed the act. Having covered the urn with a lid, with the verse ṚV.X.18.13, they should go away without looking back, should bathe in water and perform a Śrāddha for the deceased (the Ekoddishṭa according to Nārāyaṇa, the commentator.). If the son of the deceased keeps the śrauta fires, then the Sapiṇḍīkaraṇa ceremony, which ensures the admission of the 'preta, to the order of the Manes and entitles him to a Piṇḍa offering along wlth them, takes place immediately afterwards i. e. on the 12th day and from that day onwards, in a Piṇḍa-pitṛiyajña or a śrāddha ceremony, the deceased person may be considered as the first among the three fathers to whom the Piṇḍas are offered, the fourth one being left out because it is stated in the Śruti, "There can be no fourth Piṇḍa". If the son does not keep the śrauta fires, then the Ekoddishṭa śrāddha is performed for one year for the deceased until the sapiṇḍīkaraṇa. The procedure of the Ekoddishṭa differs from the norm of the Pārvaṇa in the following particulars:—There is only one strainer, one pot of Arghya water and one lump of flour. No formal invitation to Brahmins is given, nor the putting of food into the fire, nor do the Viśvedevas take part in the ceremony. The Brāhmaṇas are to be asked whether they are 'Satiated' and when they have rinsed their mouth and the Piṇḍa offered, he is to say "May what has been given at this Śrāddha etc. approach the Fathers"

*The 'Ekoddishṭa' (directed to the single preta)*

instead of "May what is offered..be imperishable" as at the Parvaṇa Śráddha.

*The sapiṇḍī-karaṇa.*

This ceremony takes place generally at the end of one year but the S. G. S. allows it after three half-months or on a day when something good happens (or on the 12th day according to a Sūtra quoted by Nārāyaṇa, the commentator of the S. G. S.). Four water-pots are filled with sesamum, scents and water (three for the Fathers, one for the newly-dead person) and 4 lumps or Piṇḍas are prepared and then the performer pours the pot belonging to the newly-dead person into the pots of the Fathers with the two verses, (Vāj. saṁh. XIX, 45, 46). And then the first lump (for the Preta) is distributed on the other three with the verses, (ṚV. X,191,3.4). These are the special features of the Śrāddha which raise the recently-departed to the status of the fathers.

SECTION C : The Ābhyudayika (Or Vṛiddhi-śrāddhas).

When a lucky or auspicious event happens, such as the birth of a son, the marriage of a son or daughter or at the time of such ceremonies as the Nāmakaraṇa or Chūḍākarma or on the performance of meritorious deeds such as the consecration or dedication of a pond or garden, the Śrāddha performed is called the Ābhyudayika. It is described in the S. G. S. IV,4. It is performed in the bright fort-night or on an auspicious day. A sacrifice to the Mothers is performed (i. e. a śrāddha ceremony directed to the Mothers here precedes that consecrated to the Fathers). An even number of Brahmins

versed in the Veda are invited to sit down and the rite is performed in the forenoon, all ritual movements being from left to right. The Darbha blades are straight and barley is used instead of sesamum. The Piṇḍas are mixed with curds, juice, fruits and fried grain. On inviting the Manes, he should say "I invite the Nāṇdīmukha (glad-faced) Manes, (because here, it is not the father, grand-father or great grand-father who are sometimes called Aśrumukha (with tearful faces) who are invited *but their ancestors : the Manes* ). Let him say "May the Nāndī-mukha manes rejoice" insted of "May what has been offered be imperishable". By saying, "I will make the Nāndīmukha manes speak", he makes the Brāhmaṇas speak. "Was it (i. e. the Śrāddha) well done?" the Brāhmanas are to be asked. The rest is the same as in other kinds of Śrāddhas.

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# Chapter XX

## Outlook on Life.

### PART. 1. THE ṚV. PERIOD.

The hymns of the ṚV. clearly reveal the aspirations, ambitions and the yearnings of the people of those days, in other words their general optimistic outlook on life. Not that they do not desire Amṛitatva (Immortality) or the company of the Gods in heaven. There certainly, are hymns in the RV. (X.121,125,129 etc), which throw out suggestions, raise doubts and ask questions–all inspired by the eternal quest of the soul for a solution of life's problems, hymns which betray a metaphysical streak and a flair for cutting the Gordian Knot of philosophy-seeds which were to blossom later into the wild yet beautiful garden of the Upanishads. But the joys and pleasures of this world interest them deeply. Thus the ṚV. is full of prayers for long life (extending for a hundred years), freedom from disease, brave progeny, power and wealth, defeat of rivals, plenty of food, and drink etc. There is no trace of pessimism in the thoughts of the ṚV. ṛishis. Whether life was a reality or illusion, substance or shadow, the ṚV. poet wants to enjoy it to the fullest possible extent. The doctrine that life is a misery which can be only ended by eradicating desire or Vāsanā–the cause of the cycle of birth and death–a doctrine developed by the Buddhists later, he for one, does not seem to subscribe to !

## PART 2. THE OTHER SAṀHITĀS AND BRĀHMAṆAS.

The same keen appreciation of all that this life holds is to be met with in this period, though there is a dis sentient note here and there now. "The Brāhmaṇas, at any rate the more ancient of them, show no trace of dissatisfaction with the present, no tinge of pessimism. For the blessed, the hereafter was a continuation of one long life of enjoyment in the company of the Gods and the Manes".[1] Many are the prayers in the Brāhmaṇas, e. g. the Taitt. Br. "for the destruction of those who hate us, and whom we hate". The desire to triumph over adversaries is very keen. By the end of this period, however, a change was gradually coming. Of course "The wholesale pessimism of the Buddhists is by no means characteristic of the Upanishads," to find real pessimism in them as apart from mild expressions of the unsatisfactoriness of the finite as .compared with the un-finite, is impossible......The most, that in this regard can be said, is that the tendency to take a pessimistic view of life may have been favoured among the upper classes of the Indians by the effect of the climate and the admixture with the aborigines which was steadily taking place and was weakening the mental character of the race; the genius of the Upanishads is different from that of the ṚV. however, many ties may connect the two periods." [2].

## PART 3. THE GṚIHYA-SŪTRAS.

### SECTION A: Optimistic Outlook.

It is very important to note that the outlook on

1. H. I. P. Vol. 2. P. 75 (2) H. O. S. Vol. 32 P. 581.

life as revealed directly and indirectly in the Gṛihya-Sūtras is a vigorous, robust and optimistic one. The Mantras accompanying the different acts of the ritual, taken from the particular Veda to which the Gṛihya-Sūtra belongs are generally selected not so much for their meaning but for their adaptability to the ritual context no doubt; but Mantras that are of the nature of prayers for prosperity and long life are eminently in keeping with the general trend and spirit of the ritual, they accompany. " सुप्रजा वीरवन्तः पतयो रयीणाम् । " [May we have valiant progeny and may we be masters of wealth" (H)] is almost the refrain of such Mantras. The prayers to Polar star in the marriage ceremony (H) are for the defeat of rivals and stability in the country and for abundance of sons, grandsons, servants, pupils, cloth, woolen blankets, bronze, gold, wives, food, safety, long life, fame, splendour, success, strength, holy lustre and enjoyments of food etc.

The address to Vāstoshpati (H) has the same tenor, "May our wealth increase in cows and horses! May we grow old in friendship and may death depart from us! May wealth drop on us like leaves from a tree! Do not kill our progeny or hero-sons!" The Snātaka while putting on ornaments (H. 1,10,6) prays that the god may endow him with long life, splendour, increase of wealth, victory in battles and debating halls, popularity among the people, etc. "May I secure the Lakshmī which sits on the face of the Rāshṭra" is a prayer on a similar occasion. "प्रियं प्रजानामधिपतिं पशूनां मा कुरु" (Make me the lord of cattle and beloved among the people) is the Mantra addressed to the Arghya by the Snātaka before

accepting it. There was not the slightest disinclination to face the struggles of life. There was a yearning to triumph over them and to ride on top of the waves of life. In the Upanayana ceremony (H), the blessings invoked are:- "May we prosper in cattle, horses, servants, food and holy lustre". The boy at the initiation is addressed thus:-"Kill your enemies, subdue the advancing foe", etc. A prosperous house (S) was the house to which cows, goats and sheep flocked. Symbolically, "Fortune" was the pinnacle and 'Law' was the chief post of the newly-built house. While entering the house, the prayer recited shows the longing for cattle, wealth, joy and the absence of death. The very name of a type of Śrāddha, Ābhyudayika (conferring good luck) is significant. Festive celebrations, dinners and commemorations of happy events such as the birth of a son, marriage, the Nāma-Karaṇa and other sacraments were common enough. The prayer in the Pratyavarohaṇa ceremony (S) is again for 'horses and cows and prosperity'. It is needless to add confirmatory evidence. It is writ large on every page of the Gṛihya-sūtras and the description of every sacrament whether it is the Annaprāśana, the Medhājanana or Nāmakaraṇa, breathes the same spirit. In the Ashṭakās the prayers are for 'safe seasons, immortality, offspring, vigour, ete. There is a special rite called 'Āyushya' for procuring long life to the new-born child. If any body has a suspicion that there was a distaste for the pleasures of life (of course, legitimate) or a tendency to retirement from the turmoil of life or absence of ambition-in short "Vairāgya"-he should turn to a description (in the Gṛihya-sūtras) of *the Kāmya ceremonies or rites prescribed with various ends in view e. g.* to bring about increase

of cattle, horses and elephants, holy lustre, property on earth, riches, averting of accidental death and misfortune, glory, happiness, a hundred cart-loads of gold, a large family, long life, acquisition of villages, non-exhaustion of the means of livelihood, prosperity in trade, rulership etc. which have been summarised in chapter VI.

### SECTION B : Practical-mindedness.

Side by side with this brimming and bubbling enthusiasm, to enjoy the legitimate pleasures of life, is a vein of practical-mindedness and sound common sense. Though ritual is met with at every step, it is known that the fire-ritual was likely to be interrupted by some accidental occurrences such as journeys etc. and arrangements are prescribed for such contingencies. Similarly the rites prescribed to keep companions, pupils and servants faithful as well as to appease the anger of a person, show that they never blinked the hard facts of life *viz*, the treachery of friends and the ingratitude of servants but faced them squarely in the face in their own (ritual) way. The numerous options allowed, as regards the various materials to be used in a rite, the varying times and modes of performing it, show that they recognised the difficulties that were likely and are not idealistic and severe in their prescriptions. Similarly the reference to the different customs of families and countries and some particular customs as over-riding the Gṛihya-sūtra rules : all this is evidence in the same direction.

### SECTION C : Other ideals.

Though thus there is no trace of morbid melancholy warping the mental out-look of the people, and

*Other ideals of life.* though there was a keen appreciation of all aspects of life, it is not to be supposed that they were epicures in any sense of the term. 'Plain-living and high-thinking' was a motto they actually lived up to. *The begging of alms and living upon them,* which was the compulsory daily duty of every Initiated student residing with his teacher, *had no reference to the financial condition of either the student or the Āchārya.* The student was to imbibe the ascetic ideal of plain-living, of opulent poverty and splendid simplicity, at a very impressionable age. Vows and observances dominated the life not merely of the student but even of the Snātaka who was the type of 'a cultured man.' Self-restraint was the very breath of his life. Thus, all actions appear to have been ritualized, and life seems to have been spiritualised as though; for three nights after the Samāvartana, the Snātaka is not to eat flesh but observe a number of restraints *or* 'truth-speaking' may do instead The rule that the Snātaka is not to hold an umbrella against the sun has a touch of Spartan severity ! In the chapter on house-building (S), we are told that truth and faith, sacrifice and charity, strength and power, the Brahman (spiritual power) and the Kshatra (military strength) are symbolically the parts of the newly-built house. Thus these were highly prized qualities. In the Jātakarman rite (H) the address to the infant as "Aśmā bhava, Paraśurbhava" etc. shows that steadiness and sharpness were prized qualities. For other ideals (mental and spiritual) the reader is referred to the chapter on "Manners and morals".

# APPENDIX.

## Social Conditions in Avestan Literature.

For the following survey, I have selected the period of Zoroastrian civilization extending roughly, from 2000 B. C. to 700 B. C. This period is called the 'Kianian' period by Mr. Dhalla who has named the different periods of the civilization after the various dynasties that have ruled over the country from the earliest times to the passing away of the last Zoroastrian empire[1] because 'Zoroastrian civilization in Ancient Iran followed the fortunes of Iranian sovereignty'.[2] The beginnings of this period are prehistoric and our picture of social conditions therein, gets a historical background only when it covers the age of the Bactrian King *Vishtaspa*, the patron of Zarathushtra. The chief sources are the Avestan texts with their Pahlavi commentaries and the Shah Namah.

### 1 The Class system.

Iranian society was divided into two broad racial types—the Aryans and the Non-Aryans. The Iranian settlers were the Aryans and the unfriendly aboriginal tribes who surrounded them and who often lifted their

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1. Zoroastrian civilization p. xxvi. 2. Ibid p. xxv.

cattle were the non-Aryans. Within the Aryan fold, four *classes* or orders are mentioned: The priests (*āthravan*), the warriors (rathaestār), the husbandmen (vāstrya fshuyant) and the artisans (hūiti); the first three being generally mentioned together. The professional origin of these classes is self-evident, but these classes did not harden into *castes* as in India, excepting for the priestly order which gradually developed (into an exclusive hereditary caste.

The chief duty of the Āthravans (literally, guardians of the fire) was to tend the fire. All religious ceremonies from birth to death were performed by them. In return they received fees, food and clothing. Their blessings were specially valued.

The king (called in Avesta, 'Khshathra'=ruler) was the head of the second–the warrior–class who formed a kind of standing army in times of peace.

The Iran of the Kianian period was like India, an agricultural country. The third class (corresponding roughly to the 'Vaiśyas, of India)–the class of husbandmen formed, therefore, the bulk of the population.

The artisan class, though mentioned but once as '*hūiti*' in the Avestan texts, did not suffer from any disabilities, as did the non-Aryan śūdra class in Indian society. It comprised persons living by hand icrafts of all kinds.

This division of society into four classes on the basis of vocations was valid during peace-time only as in times of war, the entire male population could be cons-

cripted for military service. This must have acted as a check on fissiparous tendencies and prevented the hardening of professional classes into hereditary castes, with the exception of the priestly class who were exempt from military service for all time.

It appears that the captive aborigines were forced into slavery. According to the Shah Namah, male and female slaves formed part of war-booty and royal gifts to heroes. This non-Aryan slave-class corresponds to the śūdras of Indian Society, who, however, received better treatment, having been incorporated into the Aryan fold as the fourth caste.

## 2 Marriage and the position of the Woman.

Marriage is a religious duty, binding on all-priests and laymen. Zoroastrianism was keen on the propogation of the race and therefore life-long Brahmacharya or celibacy was not looked upon with favour. Widows and widowers were permitted to remarry. According to Dhalla,[1] "the Iranians who lived before the coming of Zarathushtra as well as those of his time were, in the main, monogamous. There are no mentions of multiple marriages in the Avestan texts. Instances of polygamy, however, occurred among the higher classes, for, according to the Shah Namah, kings and heroes often indulged in a plurality of wives and mistresses". There was no restriction on intermarriages among members of the four classes but marrying outside the Zoroastrian pale was forbidden. The age of puberty, which was held to be fifteen, was the age for marriage. The parents or guardians arranged the marriages, though not without the approval

1. Zoroastrian Civilization: p. 78.

of the bride and the bridegroom. The same picture of ideal conjugal life is found as in Vedic literature. There is the same longing for progeny. Childlessness is a curse. Conjugal infidelity is the most heinons offence.

How high the position of women was, can be seen from the fact that they, not rarely, officiated as Priestesses and often acted as Judges. It follows therefore that education, even higher education, was not denied to them. From a legal point of view, they laboured under no disabilities as regards ownership of property or redress against a cruel husband. They participated in ceremonial rites and were admitted to the investiture with the sacred shirt and girdle–corresponding to the Indian Upanayana. Woman was the mistress of the family.

There is, nevertheless, some evidence of woman's inferiority to man. She was a less important partner in the religious ceremonial. During the period of her menstrual function, she was treated as an untouchable and confined to a secluded part of the house.

## 3. Family Life

The joint family system prevailed; the sons did not separate after marriage or after the death of the head of the family–viz. the father who as the principal earning member supported the family in peace and protected it in war. The mother managed the household and with the help of the female members, cooked the food, milked the cows, spun and wove.

Sons and daughters were expected to obey their

parents, revere all elders and work hard for the support of the family. The ancient Iranians *preferred sons to daughters.* exactly as the ancient Indians did. The daughter who entered a new family when married was not a permanent asset to the family, was no perpetuator of the family-line. It is small wonder that the ancient Iranians who had to carry on an incessant warfare with the attacking barbarian hordes, constantly prayed for heroic sons. The custom of adopting a son in the absence of a natural one can thus be esily accounted for.

## 4. Political Life

Kingship was hereditary and in theory the king, the head of the warrior class, had absolute power but in practice always consulted the elders viz. the nobles the chiefs, his ministers and above all the learned priests. The happiness of his subjects was to be the supreme aim of his administration. It was a kind of benevolent despotism.

As Law in its origin was but the expression of divine will, priests, who alone could interpret it, were the judges in the earlier period. The law of property and evidence and legal procedure of which oaths were the *sine qua-non*, were well developed, judging, from the classification of crimes and gradation of punishments. In the absence of direct evidence, ordeals were valid tests of innocence and guilt.

With regard to the arts of war, there is a remarkable similarity between the Indian and Iranian civilizations, in the following practices for example : (1) The system of single combats between two champions or two groups of chosen warriors from the two opposing hosts,

while the main armies merely watched the conflict. (2) The paragraph entitled '*Ritual invades the battle-field*' on page 66 may as well be a description of Iranian practices as described in the following passage[1]: "We gather from the contents of one of the lost Nasks that officiating priests, with ceremonial appliance, accompanied the fighting armies to the battle field. They invoked divine help for their armies, and pronounced imprecations against the enemy. The text speaks of the performance of the Yasna sacrifice on the day of battle...........; the recital of the Avestan formulas during the period of fighting and at the time of discharging the first arrow on the enemy."

Among the weapons of war were the mace, the club, the sword, the scimitar and the javelin but for long distance fighting, the bow and arrow were used. Armours were in use. Warriors fought on foot or mounted on horses and elephants. The chariot (Ratha) was not much in evidence on the battle-field although 'Rathaeshtār' (warrior) means literally 'one who stands in a chariot' !

## 5. Dress and Decoration

The characteristic dress of every Zoroastrian, who had reached the age of 15 was a sacred shirt made of cotton or other material, with short sleeves and reaching down to the knees and a girdle in three strings tied over it arround the waist. But costly costumes, garments of silk and tunics embroidered with gold were worn by the rich. The formal head-gear was a sheep-skin cap or turban but a skull-cap was always worn as moving above bare-

1. Zoroastrian Civilization : p. 128.

headed was condemned. Shoes and sandals were the common foot-wear, moving about with bare feet being prohibited. A white dress was symbolic of the inner whiteness of soul. Black and blue garments were used for mourning.

Golden ear-rings and necklaces and jewels were worn by men and women. Armlets for men and anklets for women were also made of gold. Ornaments inlaid with pearls, rubies and emeralds were put on by the rich.

## 6. Amusements and Entertainments

Music both vocal and instrumental was a popular form of entertainment. The instruments in common use were the flute, the pipe, the drum, the harp etc. The dancing of minstrels is referred to. The very name 'Garonmana' of the highest paradise, meaning 'the Abode of song' signifies the Iranian love of music. Hunting was the favourite sport of kings and heroes. Fishing, running races, horse-races and wrestling, are other forms of recreation and amusement.

## 7. Food and Drink

The milk of cows (of mares and goats also) and its product-clarified butter, as well as meat were important articles of food. Cakes and loaves were made of the flour of barley and wheat, which were the principal grains. The grain were also cooked in water. Quite a variety of fruits and vegetables were known. The flesh of the goat, the sheep, the deer, and of fowls and birds was freely used. An animal offering was part of a sacrificial ritual and a funeral feast exactly as in India.

Haoma (the Vedic Soma), the exhilarating beverage was a sacrificial drink freely partaken of, by the priests in the Yasna sacrifice and supposed not to produce the evil effects associated with other liquors. Madhu was a sweet and mild liquor and hurā (Vedic-surā) was a strong wine.

It is a unique feature of the Zoroastrian religion that *fasting* plays no part at all in its ritual but is even looked upon with disfavour! The strenuous practice of virtue needs a vigorous body which is impossible without a *hearty meal!*

## 8. Agriculture and Cattle.

Ancient Iran was mainly an agricultural country. One whole class of society–the Vāstrya fshuyant–was devoted to agriculture. As in ancient India, agricultural operations, such as cleansing the soil, ploughing, sowing, reaping, winnowing etc. are described as closely related to ritual acts which either inaugurated or accompanied them. The offering of the first crop to Ahura Mazda, for example, corresponds to the Āgrayaṇeshṭi of the Gṛihya-sūtras. Irrigation was in a highly developed state as there were but few rivers in Iran of any importance to agriculture.

Next to agriculture, cattle-breeding was the chief means of livelihood. It is not surprising that the wealth of a pastoral people like the Kianian Iranians should be measured in terms of cattle. The prosperity of cattle is a constant theme for prayers. Guarding them in their stables was an important duty and lifting them, a serious crime.

## 9. The fauna.

Cows and oxen, sheep and goats have already been mentioned as domestic animals. The dog, as a sacred animal, holds a position of honour to which theie is no parallel in the domestic life of any other country in the world. He is the constant companion of man in the religions and domestic life of Zoroastrians from the most ancient times. He was the ever-alert and almost sleepless guardian of his master's property and flock. The horse, used for riding and drawing chariots, was trained for the cavalry and was a popular animal. The camel is also described in the sacred texts but the elephant does not figure in the Avestan texts and is mentioned only in the Shah Namah. The cock-a domestic bird was respected as the animated alarm-clock-the awakener of men at break of day ! Cruelty to animals was strictly forbidden but destroying the noxious creatures-wolves, snakes, insects and flies-was a sacred duty.

## 10. Trade and Commerce.

There was a well-developed system of weights and measures. Buying and selling, borrowing and lending, renting etc were well regulated commercial activities. Some kind of currency must have been there though coint as such are not mentioned in Avestan texts and though payments in kink were made on a large scale.

Camels, mules and donkeys were the beasts of burden in the export and import trade carried on by land, Bactria being the centre of this trade but the sea

(the Caspean sea) was known and rivers were navigated and the latter formed no barrier to trade communications.

### 11. Arts and crafts : the Industries.

The artisans (designated once as 'hūiti' in the Avestan texts) formed an important and independent class of Iranian society. This classification itself is an index to the vast development of arts and crafts among the people. There were goldsmiths, silversmiths, coppersmiths and blacksmiths; painters, carpenters, tent-makers, basket-makers and cobblers. Even in very early times, the Iranians had made great progress in the arts of pottery and embroidery. Spinning and weaving were home industries. Thrones, crowns, helmets, girdles and tapestries of gold were manufactured under royal patronage.

The professions and occupations have already been described in the section on the class system which in Iran had a professional basis.

### 12. Architecture: the Iranian P. W. D.

In the Avestan texts, there are references on the one hand to simple habitations such as huts of wood, tents and light or almost portable houses of clay and on the other to commodious and airy mansions built of bricks and stone with doors, windows, balconies etc. and with stables for cows, horses and sheep, attached. The house had a flat roof and had not risen, apparently, to the upper story-stage ! We have not much information about the construction of fire-temples. Charnel houses and forts are described in the Shah Namah. There is frequent mention of canals and bridges over them to facilitate trade as well as of lakes and wells. King Yima was the first to construct ships wherewith to cross the

sea. Road-ways traversed in Rathas or chariots and with camels, horses and donkeys are referred to.

### 13. Health, Hygiene and sanitation.

As in ancient India, illness and disease were supposed to be due to the evil influence of demons, black magic and the evil eye, the recital of spells and incantations by the priests being the standard cure. Medicines prepared from herbs and plants were administered by physicians and operations were performed by surgeons for the relief of suffering humanity. The healers' profession was a noble one and there is evidence to show that it was well-organized. Veterinary Doctors attended to the diseases of dogs and other animals.

There is the same insistence on cleanliness as in Indian Literature. A clean body meant a clean mind and a clean soul. Daily baths and frequent ritualistic washings are prescribed. A corpse is one of the most unclean things and pollutes anything it comes into contact with, not excluding mother earth, running or stagnant waters and trees and fuel. Elaborate methods are prescribed for the purification of garments, utensils and other objects defiled by contact with the dead.

### 14. The Calendar.

Avestan literature speaks of six sacred feasts celebrating the six seasonal periods of varying duration making up an year of 365 days. This year was very likely *lunar* in the earliest of times, consisting of 12 months of 30 days, and was adjusted to the solar year by intercalating five days at the end. The absence of a

fixed era is a great handicap to the reconstruction of ancient Iranian history.

Avestan literature like the Vedic has preserved reminiscences of the excessively cold climate of the original Aryan home–of a winter of 10 months and a summer of two months and a revival of Nature, as it were, at the vernal equinox, in contrast to the new Iranian home with its warm and bracing climate.

## 15. Education.

Education was the primary concern of the priestly class, whose duty, as in India, was to preserve the text of the sacred scriptures. They were thus the first students and the first teachers of the community. That they maintained this lead is seen from the Iranian designation 'aethṛa paiti' of a teacher which is applied exclusively to a teacher of the priestly class.

Education commenced at the age of 8. The syllabus of studies embraced all branches of knowledge–sacred and secular. The relation between teacher and pupil was very close. The teacher must be a person of high morals and keen intellect. The pupil must be industrious and obedient to his teacher. Recitation by the teacher of a text and the repeating of the same by the pupil was the standard mode of instruction. The Iranian teacher was, however, allowed for the benefit of the pupil, to write a portion of the sacred text on a wooden slate whereas in India the Vedas were under no circumstances to be reduced to writing ! Another difference was that whereas in India, the house of the teacher was the only place of residence and instruction for the pupil, in

Iran, a room either in the teacher's house or in a fire-temple could serve as a class-room. Memory was a highly prized faculty. Specialization was allowed in subjects like Religion, Law and Medicine.

## 16. The disposal of the dead.

A corpse was to be removed to an unfrequented and elevated spot, preferably to the top of a mountain, far away from the crowded places. [The removal should take place during day-time when the rays of the sun prevent contagion; at night, the corpse-bearers are liable to infection]. The corpse was to be kept exposed until the vultures and dogs had done their work on the flesh. A very early custom was to tie stones or brass to the dead body so that the dogs and corpse-eating birds might not scatter the bones on trees or water. The bones were collected and deposited in a charnel-house or receptacle made of stones or earth and so constructed that the rays of the sun could penetrate inside. The whole procedure is governed by one dominant belief viz. that a corpse is one of the most unclean things and the most fruitful source of infection. This belief explains the condemnation of burial as an inexpiable sin. Burial is a menace to the health of the living because the decay of the body sets free germs of diseases which thrive on burial-grounds. The demolition of tombs and

the digging out of corpses, if they have been buried through mistake are meritorious acts !

There are several days in the year, set apart for the commemoration of the dead. How remarkably similar, the Indian and Iranian concepts of the departed Fathers were can be seen from a comparison of the Śrāddha cult with the following belief[1] :—"Though the ancestral dead were invisible to their living descendants, they came down from the heavens on the days sacred to them, entered their former abode, walked around the hearth, partook of the sacrificial feast prepared in their honour, rejoiced in the joys of their descendants and grieved in their sorrows. During life, they were helpers and supporters of their kith, after death, they were still their guardians and protectors".

## 17. Outlook on Life.

The inward life of man is a constant struggle between the two primeval forces or spirits of Good and Evil, of righteousness and wickedness, of truth and falsehood. He must fight temptation and conquer it. He should even take the offensive and forestall Angra Mainya's aggression, full of hope because Ahura Mazda is stronger than the strongest foe. Truth and goodness

1. Zorostrian Civilization; : P. 67.

must triumph in the end. *This ethical dualism*–a peculiar doctrine of Zarathushtra–has been translated to the Cosmic sphere. The world is all movement and strife. *Animal life and vegetable life are possible because of this eternal struggle.*

In the social sphere, Zarathushtra prescribes a life of hard work, of unremitting industry. Advancement and improvement must be the mottos of man. A natural corollary to this doctrine is a *cheerful optimistic and realistic veiw of life.* The world may be imperfect but is certainly not illusory. "It is no wonder that monastic life with its exaltation of celibacy, mendicancy and mortification never found a congenial soil in Zoroastrian Persia."[1]

1 Ibid : p. 37.

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